

Serving Dance in Chicago
A Planning Process for
Small to Mid-sized Companies and Independent Artists

Final Report

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1. Introduction

This Final Report presents the findings from a planning process that was designed to study and respond to the needs of the Chicago dance community for service provision, with a focus on Small to Mid-sized companies and Independent artists in Dance (referred to as SMID, in this study).

The Planning Process was co-directed by three artists whose companies and ways of working fall into the categories of independent and small/mid-size: Julia Rhoads of Lucky Plush Productions, Eduardo Vilaro of Luna Negra Dance Theater, and Ginger Farley, independent artist. It also benefited from the advice of a steering committee¹ and the Dance Advisory Committee (the Advisory) to the Chicago Community Trust (CCT or the Trust).

Background: The Chicago Dance Community and the Need for a Study

Chicago can boast of a diverse dance community, one that spans the city and suburbs. Although the Chicago Dance Mapping Project reported as many as 258 dance-making entities in the six-county area, the largest and most visible organizations creating and producing dance, those with budgets over \$150,000, number only about a dozen.² This means that the vast majority—over 90% or literally hundreds—work as independent artists, pick up ensembles and small or mid-sized companies. The ways of working in dance are so diverse that even the definitions of what constitutes a “small” or “mid-sized” company are not established; for example, the term mid-sized may refer to the number of dancers who perform or the somewhat arbitrary distinction of an annual budget size.

In embarking on the planning process, the premise on the part of the project directors was that the lifestyle and working conditions of this wide array of artists reflect the limitations in 1) resources available to them including services. However, adequate research had not been done to determine how this reality plays out in Chicago and 2) the implications for service provision. Based on their own experience and extensive interaction with their peers, the directors felt that while it is possible to run a “company,”³ inadequate support structures make it almost impossible to sustain operations and provide the level of stability that can retain artists and staff. Whether they work independently or within a modest company structure, artists tend to wear multiple hats as choreographers, dancers, teachers, administrators or writers. A lifestyle that is pieced together in this manner causes a constant struggle to generate enough income to survive, while allowing

¹ The names of steering committee members can be found in Appendix A.

² According to John Munger of Dance USA, who completed the Mapping Project in 2002, four dance-making entities have budgets over \$1 million, two more are from \$500,000 to \$999,000, and seven have budgets from \$150,000 to \$499,000. The resulting group of 13 companies includes The Joffrey Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, River North Chicago Dance Company, Trinity Irish Dance Company, Muntu Dance Theater of Chicago, Giordano Jazz Dance Chicago, Chicago Festival Ballet, Mordine and Company Dance Theater, Jump Rhythm Jazz Project, Chicago Moving Company, Hedwig Dances, Emergence Dance Theatre, and Ballet Russe. Several others may have crossed the line into this category since the Mapping Project was completed.

³ The term company is used broadly in the dance field. In this report it refers to any entity that creates and performs dance, whether for profit or nonprofit, and regardless of size, budget, staffing, or other working arrangements.

some time to create, perform, and tour. Balancing these multiple roles becomes such a burden that in their effort to generate income, artists sacrifice the time to administer their own companies or manage their production schedule, let alone tour their work. And, they lack the monetary support to hire skilled administrators. Given the shortage of space, choreographers and dancers can work for months or years to create performances that close after a three-day run—projects that are often funded out of pocket by family, friends, and maybe a benefit. Regardless of these distinctions, their ways of working are predicated by limited or nonexistent staff, small budgets that go mostly for production, and minimal volunteer help.

Any consideration of the needs of artists who face such limitations must include an assessment of their need for services. While many services are provided for the nonprofit arts field, it appears that they are structured to respond more to organizations with larger budgets and full-time paid staff than to the needs of independent artists/small companies with limited budgets and staff. In fact, the budget, staff size and structure of these SMIDs leave them either ineligible for, or unable to take full advantage of, many services. Therefore, project directors surmised that while the perception is that services are provided, the reality is that small organizations are left with few or no alternatives for assistance or training in areas such as management, board development, and fundraising, among many other areas. And, it was assumed that artists lack information about how to access the services that do exist.

Historically, dance service organizations are one of the resources that have supported artists with limited capacity. The city is not unique in its need for such services; in a talk to Chicago funders Douglas Sonntag, Director of Dance for the National Endowment for the Arts, addressed the role that service organizations play in the professional development of independent artists and small companies, as well as the gap left by funding cuts and the subsequent loss of service organizations over the past decade:

Viable service organizations provide vehicles for communication such as newsletters, websites, and convening. Through their leadership and advocacy, these organizations focus what is too often perceived by the larger community as discontented static into a coherent message to help shape cultural policy and community priorities. They also provide tangible services to their artist constituents through showcasing opportunities, festivals, presentation, data collection and analysis, and publicity. Nationally, we have seen a serious demise in dance service organizations. Where there were once thriving organizations in the Bay Area, Los Angeles, Seattle, Chicago, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, and Boston, they have vanished or become hollow shells of what they once were. This in turn has increased the isolation of dance artists, and limited the amount of information that can be distributed. Most crucially, it has diluted the unified voice of a dance constituency in shaping community life, from the building of theaters, to how the schools can incorporate arts into the curriculum. Service organizations, which [choreographer] Bella Lewitzky once described as the “sinews that hold our dance body together,” were providing a means for local and national communication, sharing of knowledge, and an end to the deadening isolation that had marked so much of the dance field outside of New York. Unfortunately, the dance field is too large not to have a service organization but it’s too small and poor to support one.

Sonntag’s observations have proven true in Chicago: because there exists no one service organization in Chicago that is dedicated solely to dance, there is no range of necessary services provided; no regular forum for issues to be considered or addressed (outside of an occasional

town meeting); and no center for advocacy or unified voice for the field. Such inadequate support and low visibility has left the dance field largely on its own to survive. And it has left funders without a central source of information about dance, its issues, and needs.

The Dance Advisory Committee's Retreat

The major recommendation from a retreat held in May of 2004 was to look at the feasibility of providing more adequate services for the dance field. (The names of those who attended the retreat can be found in Appendix B.) The retreat was held to make recommendations, for use by CCT's Dance Initiative. The Initiative, shaped around the theme of excellence in dance, has accomplished much toward its goal to enhance dance in Chicago. The Trust could not sustain the same level of time, funding, and administrative resources that it had in the past. Specifically, the Trust sought advice about how it might build on its accomplishments, and perhaps leave a legacy for the dance field, without creating a financial dependency on the foundation. The major area of interest was service provision. Throughout the retreat, concern was expressed over the lack of services to independent artists and smaller companies and comments were made about how a service function might help sustain, in part, the Trust's objectives for the Dance Initiative, which are to:

1. Support artists' creative process in order to facilitate their artistic growth.
2. Raise visibility for the diverse range of artists and their work.
3. Boost interaction within the field.
4. Expand audiences in Chicago.
5. Increase the capacity for organizations that support dance.

The top priority for the group was to address the need for a comprehensive service entity that is dedicated to dance. There was consensus that the dance community needs a service organization that:

- Can offer strong leadership and is run by those who have sophisticated knowledge of the dance field;
- Is supported by funders;
- Has legitimacy;
- Accomplishes what it sets out to do; and
- Has vision, and can play a catalytic role in realizing that vision.

The passion in the room was expressed by one, who said, "*The time is now. The time is right. The will is there.*"

Purpose of the Planning Process

The purpose of this planning process was to:

- Present a composite picture of the needs of independent artists and small companies.
- Provide a plan for service provision for independent artists and small companies, as well as the broader field, for use by the leadership of the dance field itself as well as funders.
- Build on the planning, research, and direct support to artists that has been provided by and for the Chicago dance community in the past several years, by such funders as the Chicago Community Trust, the Driehaus Foundation, the Alphawood Foundation, the

Cheney Foundation, the Mayer and Morris Kaplan Family Foundation, and The Prince Charitable Trusts, among others.

Research Questions

The questions addressed through the planning process fell into two major areas.

1. Background Research on Artists' Needs and Current Service Provision

- To what degree are services being provided for small companies and independent artists? What gaps exist in current service provision?
- What are the community's needs and issues that should be addressed by a service function/organization?
- What efforts are underway in other cities to deal with the need for services?
- What can be learned from the successes of the theater community and applied to dance?
- What existing models of service provision might be replicated?

2. The Potential Structure and Function of a Dance Services Entity

These questions were answered by the project directors, steering committee, and Advisory, in conjunction with the consultant, based on their review of the background research.

- What would programming consist of?
- Who will support a services function?
- Who will run it? Who will staff it? What leadership qualities are required?
- Where will it be housed?

Throughout the process, additional questions were raised: Is there a viable network in existence that could expand its service to dance? Can services be provided without creating a new organization? In short, this process would not necessarily result in a recommendation to form a new organization.

Scope of Planning Process

The planning process took place in seven phases.

1. Identification and convening of a steering committee. This committee informed the research design and findings, and assisted with developing recommendations. The names of committee members appear in Appendix A.

2. Comparison of existing services for dance. Research was conducted on existing services offered by other organizations for dance and consolidated into a document. A description of this process appears in Section 2, and the research, called the Comparative Document of Services Available to Artists, is found in Appendix C.

3. Examination of artists' needs. Four focus groups with artists were conducted and served two purposes: 1) To assess what needs are, and are not, being met by the existing service organizations, based on the Comparative Document and; 2) To identify the major issues that artists face in creating work and managing their careers—issues that might be addressed through services. The findings from this rich discussion appear in Section 3.

4. Examination of existing service providers in Chicago. Interviews were conducted with major service providers in Chicago, who were asked about their history of and capacity to serve dance, as well as their interest in serving dance in the future. The findings from the focus groups were also shared with them so that they could benefit from knowing what artists thought of their services. In addition, individuals from the dance field who offered a unique perspective were interviewed, including Lisa Tylke, former Executive Director of the Chicago Dance Coalition. This research appears in Section 4.
5. Examination of service provision in other cities. Efforts are underway in cities across the country to start dance service organizations. It was thought that Chicago might benefit from knowing more about the work that had taken place in these cities, and draw from any ideas that might work here. Interviews were conducted with individuals affiliated with these efforts in Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC. A summary can be found in Section 5.
6. Models of service provision. Throughout the Advisory's meetings and research conducted for this study, many dance practitioners, including artists, regularly referred to several organizations in New York that offer highly effective services to the dance community. An examination of what is offered and how it is delivered would provide ideas to the Chicago community as it developed its own service model. In March of 2005, research was conducted on Pentacle, Dance/NYC, The Field, and Dance Theater Workshop and their staff traveled to Chicago to speak to the Advisory. A summary of these models can be found in Section 6.
7. Community response and next steps. The steering committee and Advisory has reviewed this information and the consultant offers talking points for next steps, which appear in Section 8.

Outcomes

It was hoped that the process would:

- Reveal to the dance community the services that are already available, as well as the needs that are not being met. By creating such a knowledge base, in the form of a written document, artists would better understand what services can be accessed and how to attain them.
- Provide a timely assessment. A report that reflects current realities and needs would be of use to the community as well as funders, some of whom are not closely familiar with the dance field.
- Amass conversations within the dance community. Providing a structure for dialogue among artists would build awareness of the community's needs, as well as gaps in service provision. It would also allow for relationships to be built among artists.
- Create an interface between existing service providers and the dance community. New and stronger connections would be made between the artists and the service organizations that do exist, leaving them more likely to access and obtain help.

In addition, the information generated through the planning process has already been used in a variety of local and national settings:

- The information can help build or strengthen relationships with dance communities in other cities. Funders and administrators have already obtained the information that has been gathered from those cities, and have expressed an interest in sharing ideas.
- The information about services that is presented in the Comparative Document has been shared with Chicago Service Organizations and some artists. It could be made available on a website so that artists could access it, and it could be updated on a regular basis.
- Local service organizations have benefited from knowing the findings from the artist focus groups, which were conveyed to them in interviews.

Relationship to the Trust's Dance Initiative

This planning process builds on, and complements, the prior planning and accomplishments of the Chicago dance community, largely through the Trust's Dance Initiative, in several ways.

- The Mapping Project provided sound statistics of the predominance of small organizations and independent artists in dance. This useful tool revealed how many artists exist, their budget size, and other crucial information that gave a quantitative view of the community. But it could not ask or answer questions about *why* artists operated in the manner that they did. Considering its findings in light of what is revealed in this study provides the background for the need for services to this substantial group of artists.
- The reports generated by the Trust that document the Dance Initiative point to the need for service provision.
- At Advisory meetings convened by the Trust, service provision has been a running theme. The issue is of concern to other dance funders and was discussed with funders at sessions that were held by the Trust in 2004. Though the Advisory has discussed this as a recurring topic, and shows concern for the artists through its demonstration projects, the needs of unincorporated and small organizations had remained largely unaddressed.
- Finally, this planning process reflects the needs that are being explored in other major dance centers across the country, where the fall-out in dance service provision over the past decade has been detrimental to small companies and unincorporated artists. The cities of Philadelphia, Minneapolis, San Francisco, and Washington, DC are currently looking at similar concerns.

As evidenced from the findings contained in this report, the Chicago arts community had much to say about service provision and what can be offered to its dance artists. The findings give insight into how artists create work and manage their careers and how service organizations strive to support that process. Most importantly, the findings provide much food for thought, for reflection and action.

2. Comparative Document of Services Available to Artists

In order to begin the research, it was crucial to know what services are already being offered to Chicago artists. Based on the steering committee's recommendations, the major organizations that provide services to the dance community were researched via online and print sources.⁴ The research was then compiled into a database.⁵ Organizations include:

African American Arts Alliance	Links Hall*
Arts and Business Council*	Music and Dance Alliance
CPAs for the Arts	Music and Dance Theater
Department of Cultural Affairs*	Nonprofit Finance Fund
Donors Forum of Chicago*	Puerto Rican Arts Alliance
Lawyers for the Creative Arts*	Sacred Dance Guild*
League of Chicago Theaters*	

This Comparative Document includes:

- A description of each major service area offered by all of the above organizations;
- Eligibility and membership requirements, if known;
- Contact information; and
- In some instances, fees involved.

The document has the following uses:

- It was used in the focus groups to both share with artists what services exist and to find out if they were aware of and/or utilizing those services.
- By having this information in a database, the research can be searched, sorted, duplicated, and eventually placed onto a website.
- It will be distributed to artists for their own reference, as well as to organizations such as the Department of Cultural Affairs, which will incorporate it into their own information.
- The reader of this report is encouraged to share this information with artists and others who might benefit from it. It is believed that the Comparative Document is unique in that, until now, no single source of detailed information about services for dance artists has existed.

The Comparative Document can be found in Appendix C.

⁴ The asterisks indicate the organizations that were believed to provide the most comprehensive or important services, which were also interviewed for additional information. Due to limits in time and budget, only about six could be interviewed.

⁵ Jennifer Zahn was instrumental in compiling this information. Zahn relocated to Chicago in 2002 to pursue her Master's degree in Arts Management after spending 13 years in Madison, Wisconsin as a concert presenter and educator. She founded Fleurus Consulting, and works for the Wrigley Confectionery Company as a retail analyst and database administrator.

3. Artist Focus Groups

Introduction

The purpose of having focus groups was to gather artists working independently and in small and mid-sized companies to discuss issues of concern to this study, namely:

1. Insight into working circumstances. What are the major issues that face artists in making their work and managing their careers?
2. The degree to which artists feel part of a larger community. Did artists see themselves working within a larger community of artists, or did they view themselves more as autonomous workers who reside in the same large city?
3. Artists' need for services. What services, in the minds of artists, are most needed and would most help them do their work?
4. Awareness and usage of existing services. How aware are artists of services offered? What services are used by artists and what are not used? How often are services used? Which of the existing services are seen by artists to be most useful? If existing services are not used, why not? What are the barriers to usage?

Selection and Participation. In late September, four focus groups were held and included five, seven, eight and ten artists, respectively. In addition, the three project directors participated in some or all of the groups, and two individual interviews were conducted with artists who could not attend the focus groups. This brought the total number of artist/participants to 35 (several more had responded but could not attend at the last minute). The list of artists who participated can be found in Appendix E. The project directors initially selected a total of 50 artists from a list of about 270, which was drawn largely from the Mapping Project and augmented by their own experience and opinions. In making final decisions, the directors' main concern was that there be adequate representation of professional artists, but they also strived to balance a range of characteristics, including gender, race, age, company structure (or lack thereof), budget size, 501(c)3 status, and location.⁶ Artists were initially recruited through a letter of invitation signed by all three directors, with follow up via email and phone; they were offered an honorarium of \$50 for their time. The letter can be found in Appendix D. A group of this size seemed the optimum number to recruit; it was desired that the focus groups include six to eight artists each (a number larger than that would not have allowed each artist to have significant time to speak given the two-hour time limit). The response on the part of artists was outstanding, with a response rate of almost 80% illustrating a high degree of interest and enthusiasm in this process.

Quantitative and Qualitative Information. A final script for the focus groups was developed by the project directors in conjunction with the consultant and can be found in Appendix I. The sessions were tape recorded, transcribed, and analyzed.⁷ In the focus groups, artists completed several short survey forms about their finances, staffing, nonprofit status, and working circumstances, as well as about the kinds of services that they needed and accessed. (The survey

⁶ Focus groups usually involve purposeful rather than random samples, for several reasons: 1) The focus group requires a time commitment, which makes recruitment difficult; 2) This kind of research is usually geared toward targeting a specific population about specific issues, such that it is usually necessary to recruit people who fit a certain demographic or have a certain knowledge base.

⁷ The analysis conducted used a computerized coding system to maintain objectivity and consistency.

form can be found in Appendix F.) The statistics revealed a lot about trends in working circumstances and help put into context the qualitative findings from the group discussions. Both types of information, when used together, provide a more complete picture of the ways in which artists who work outside of major institutions manage their professional lives.

Overview of Participants

Of the 35 focus group participants, approximately 75% were female and 25% were male.⁸ The participants were almost evenly split between those who are single and those who are married or in a committed relationship. Almost 80% live in Chicago proper, while other participants are residents of the following suburbs:

City Proper	27	79%
Oak Park	2	6%
Evanston	2	6%
Glenview	1	3%
Oakbrook	1	3%
Riverside	1	3%

A breakdown of the 22 zip codes can be found under Appendix G.

Characteristics of Participants as Artists

Span of Career. On average, the artists have been making work in Chicago for a long time, 14.3 years, though the range spanned from 2-52 years. The median number of years was 10. The difference between the average and median tells us that there are a few artists who have been working for a very long time in the city, who skew the average slightly. While 23 artists had been working in Chicago for fewer than 14.3 years, only nine had been working longer than this average.

Dance Forms. The majority of participants work in a dance form that they self-described as either “modern” or “contemporary,” and many described their work as multi-disciplinary or incorporating several forms of dance. The range of dance forms include dance theatre, ballet, flamenco, East Indian, improvisation, modern, jazz, hip-hop, and multimedia forms. Only two identified their work as “traditional.”⁹ Refer to Appendix H for a detailed list of dance forms.

Budget Size and Range. The budgets of artists’ companies ranged from under \$25,000 to \$650,000. *Almost three-quarters of artists’ budgets fall under \$100,000 and half have budgets*

⁸ Because the sample is small, and the selection process was purposeful rather than random, the statistics presented in this section cannot be generalized to all artists in the Mapping Project. However, this sample appears to be representative of the Mapping Project in several key ways, and comparisons can be found in Appendix M.

⁹ The sample was selected in order to have similar groups in each focus group, so that an adequate amount of information could be gathered to answer certain questions. One concern that arose was how to deal with the sacred and culturally specific dance communities, which were present in large numbers on the Mapping Project, but which operate quite differently than contemporary dance; the questions we asked would not have been relevant to them. An interview with the head of the Sacred Dance Guild was conducted to gain an understanding of how they functioned and is presented in the next section of this report. Efforts were made to represent some of the culturally specific communities in the focus groups.

below \$50,000. All participants with budgets over \$100,000 had paid staff, compared to only three (9%) with a budget under \$50,000.

Budget range	Number in range	%	Number in this range with paid staff	%
\$650K	1	3%	1	100%
\$360K	1	3%	1	100%
\$200-300K	4	12%	4	100%
\$100-200K	3	9%	3	100%
\$50-\$100K	8	24%	3	38%
\$25-50K	4	12%	0	0%
Under \$25K	12	36%	1	8%
Not answered	1	3%		

Administration: Working Arrangements and Payment. In terms of organizational structure, 22 out of 35 participants (65%) had nonprofit status. Only 13 of the 35 participants (38%) had paid staff, and of those only four had full-time staff, leaving 62% with no staff. *Therefore, while the majority – two-thirds—of artists have nonprofit status, the majority of almost two-thirds also have no paid administrative staff.*

Payment of Administrative Staff	Number	%
Artists <u>without</u> paid administrative staff	21	62%
Artists <u>with</u> paid administrative staff	13	38%
full time	2	6%
part time	7	21%
full and part time	2	6%
freelance only	2	6%

Artistic Staff: Working Arrangements and Payment. Slightly more than half of the participants (56%) work on an ongoing basis with dancers, while a majority (76%) work on a project-to-project basis (in some cases artists work in both manners). Participants worked with dancers in a variety of ways, including as steady company members, collaborators for specific projects and as part of pick-up groups. One artist preferred the traditional company to the pick-up model and explained, “Most of my dancers are ongoing. I pay for their classes and give them a lot of guarantees.” Another artist’s structure provided a contrasting example. She defined “company member” broadly to include anyone who does or did work with her for a specific reason: “That definition evolved from the reality that only for a few people is there a regular source of compensation...I offer project compensation only, so I discourage over-identity with a group; it empowers them as dancers to work with many.”

When it comes to the balance between paying themselves and their dancers, participants commonly said that they pay their dancers but only pay themselves “sometimes.” Only about one-third of the participants pay their dancers for all rehearsals, while more than two-thirds pay their dancers for all performances. *In total, 94% of artists pay their dancers for some portion of the time spent in rehearsal and/or performance.*

Payment of Artistic Staff	Yes		No		Sometimes		No answer	
Artists who pay themselves	10	29%	6	18%	17	50%	1	3%
Artists who pay their dancers:	27	79%	0	0%	5	15%	2	6%
for rehearsals	11	32%			9	26%		
for performances	25	74%			7	21%		
through bartering	0	0%			1	3%		

Income Sources. Artists received some amount of income from a wide range of sources. As the chart below shows, the majority of around 80% receive support from a combination of box office revenue, other arts-related earned income, and donations from individuals. *Therefore, artists are making ends meet from their own sources more than from formal contributed sources, such as foundations and government.*¹⁰

Income Source	Number	Percent
<i>Earned</i>		
Box Office Revenue	28	82%
Other arts-related earned income (such as teaching, bodywork, etc.)	27	79%
Other non-arts-related jobs/projects to support work	12	35%
Supported, in part, by the income of another person such as a spouse	8	24%
<i>Contributed</i>		
Individual Donors	27	79%
Foundations	23	68%
Government agencies	22	65%
National	3	9%
Regional	2	6%
State	18	53%
City	15	44%

Performance Arrangements. In the past two years, most of the participants (88%) had produced their own work, and more than half had been presented (65%). (However, these presentations may include evenings that are shared with many artists, such as Dance Chicago.) All but one participant had performed in the last two years. A breakdown is as follows:

¹⁰ In a Village Voice article, *Follow the Money: Young Dance Artists Confront the Discouraging Logistics of Working in New York* (April 20, 2004), Jim Dowling supports this idea: “Who’s supporting the work of these small troupes and independent artists? By and large, it’s the artists themselves. Their day jobs, grants, and audience receipts (often split 50-50 with the theater) underwrite their performing....To cover costs, dancers work as administrators, secretaries, models, nannies, exotic dancers, waitpersons, or graphic designers. They take part time gigs to accommodate rehearsal schedules or work full time to get benefits. Choreographers the Voice surveyed who range in age from 23 to 52, report annual incomes of \$15,000-\$20,000, rarely derived exclusively from dance...” The funding cuts of the past decade “hit hardest at the bottom of the dance food chain...[according to NYSCA] dance organizations with budgets of under \$250,000 make up 76% of the field and received 11% of funding.”

Been presented:	22	65%
Self-produced:	30	88%
Not performed:	1	3%

Artists' View of the Dance Community

Drawing from Artists, Family, Friends, and Places

There are a lot of communities I can access. I can go as an individual to different communities and try to connect...My first response [to the question] was 'There is no community here for me.' The flip side is I have access to every community here, there's not a barrier that prevents me from exploring.

When asked to describe their own dance community, the artists' definitions varied widely. Some identified their community as made up of people with whom they have close personal relationships including friends, family, students, and administrators that they have known over the years.

Others identified a community based on close artistic relationships that include other artists who they talk to about making work, who have similar ideas, who attend their performances, whose work provides inspiration, and who challenge them to make better work themselves. Others defined their communities in mostly geographic terms, such as one artist whose two main communities centered around students, professors, and graduates of a Chicago university, and the students and families surrounding a youth dance company in a Chicago suburb. A few participants struggled to identify their own dance community, while others made comments that were indicative of an all-inclusive view of the community such as, "Anyone who makes dance in Chicago is part of the community." One mentioned the need to balance the ethnic dance community and the mainstream dance community.

One independent artist provided a different perspective that indicated alienation, saying that, due to the lack of support for artists without nonprofit structures, she has "a community of like-minded peers that I can count on one hand, and a lot of them leave town." Despite her lack of a peer artist group, she talked about how reaching out is helping her to make her own connections in the broader community.

Divisions within the Dance Community

The mainstream community is segregated along the different scenes...postmodern, hip-hop, capoeira...There's not [a place to] explore and share our dances with the Chicago community.

Though most participants felt that their own communities were strong and supportive, many also identified divisions within the dance community, among artists who work in different dance forms. Another main division discussed was that between artists involved in large companies, as opposed to those who work in small ensembles or independently. As one put it, "The bigger companies are removed from us...there's Joffrey, River North, Hubbard...and the rest of us." One artist spoke about the difficulty of trying to be part of the greater Chicago dance community as a company with a home base in the suburbs, citing problems attracting audiences and critics due to their location. One artist took issue with the idea of a dance community in general saying, "To discuss whether or not there is a dance community encourages people to identify themselves as 'part of' or 'not part of' that community. I reject anything that suggests this separation. Artists need to make work. But in sharing that work, they avail themselves to be a part of the [broader] community." Regardless of how they defined the segments, all participants seemed to feel that the result of these divisions is a less-than-supportive community characterized by not personally knowing the vast majority of artists and only seeing the work of a small circle of peers.

The Barrier of Time: An Overstretched Commodity

When I got here, everyone was working so hard to survive... Because of that, it felt almost alienating.

For many, the underlying reason that was cited for these divisions in the community is the barrier of time. Regardless of the dance form, company structure or organization size, everyone is just trying to survive, which doesn't lend itself to community-building. In all four discussions, artists were hindered by the lack of hours in the day that they have to spend on developing, or simply being part of, a community. When trying to make ends meet is their focus, as one said, it is the reaching out and making connections that fall by the wayside: "One primary way that this lack of time plays out is that these artists don't have the time to see each other's work and lend support to their fellow Chicago dance artists." As one said, "Sometimes I'm interested, but trying to run a company and make work and wear the administrative hats...it's frustrating because there's not enough time in the day to see everything I want to see." This sentiment recurred in all focus groups in comments that pointed to financial needs and other responsibilities: "I used to see everything. Now I have a family." There was some acknowledgment in one focus group that preliminary progress is being made. As one said, "There have been genuine rumblings over the past several years in the dance community to cross some of these barriers. It's a very genuine thing. There are little sparks of things happening."

A Desire for Individual Relationships

I decided I was going to stay focused on my mission and build relationships with people I feel I can resonate and work with...It's that energy that will make it real for me... They don't even have to like the way I choreograph or dance, but they have to have a respect for the fact that I'm

an artist and there's [an energy] that we share. That's not what's going on right now to the extent needed. That's the work that would excite me.

This artist's idea of shared community met with a great deal of agreement in one focus group and colored much of their discussion. Many expressed a desire for a supportive community and one artist reflected on how community involvement can affect the work: "If an artist becomes consumed by the community and by what you have to do to survive in it, it can take you off your mission. But if you look at the mainstream, it doesn't necessarily complement what you are trying to accomplish inside of your mission. A lot of artists struggle with that: how do we speak our truth and still be part of a community?" This comment led into a passionate discussion about the importance of real relationships with individual people as the basis of community.

Audiences: An Elusive Community

The community that's most challenging for me to understand is the people who come to see the work. I don't know how to reach them. Who are they? Where are they coming from? How did they get here? That's what eludes me most.

In all focus groups, similar themes emerged about the lack of support and divisions among audiences. Artists expressed the desire to expand their audiences, perhaps beginning, as one suggested, by identifying them and then by attracting more people from outside the dance community. As one said, "There's a small family thing going on in the modern community... it's good to support each other, but how do you expand beyond that? I always see the same people at the show." Another added, "It's time to move outside of the dance community to increase... my circle." For some, increasing their circle also means drawing audiences who tend to see the work of certain artists or dance forms. One pointed out that "There's not a lot of crossover, audience-wise, between jazz and modern and other dance genres." Two artists expressed frustration about the fact that they are able to draw bigger, more supportive audiences when they travel, much more so than in their home community: "When I'm out of the country or out of the city, people really embrace my work much more." This artist attributed the situation, however, not to an intrinsic difference between Chicago and other cities, but to the energy surrounding a visiting artist in any city: "I realized that's the nature of what happens... people are going to believe how they hype you because you're the new person in town, but if you stuck around, it would level out."

Several artists offered ideas of how they expand audiences and gave examples from their own experience. As one said, "We started with a predominantly African American audience, which has opened up more as we established a team concept as to how we go out and obtain audiences." The model of the artistic and management teams collaborating to draw new audiences was successful for this company, although it would probably not work for smaller organizations without the same amount of staffing. Overall, the participants agreed that even audience building on a small scale would eventually strengthen the Chicago dance community as a whole. As one artist encouraged, "We can each do it our own community and then we'll spread out... We have to get our own community excited first. And then it grows further. If we can support each other, you'll drop a pebble and the ripple effect gets going."

Funding

Though the entire two hours in each focus group could have been about the funding situation in Chicago, in order to allow time for discussion of other areas of importance, participants were only asked to say the one most important thing about funding and their needs.

Amount and Types of Funding

As expected, many artists' initial response was to state that funding is incredibly limited; as one said, "More! We need more!" One artist explained the problem saying, "There are limited opportunities, and a limited number of institutions with foundations or corporations that give money, and it's becoming more limited as corporate headquarters move out of Chicago." While one participant mourned the loss of certain kinds of funding saying, "And all the operating funds are going away," another felt that "Supporting new work is the biggest issue. How do you go about funding some kind of infrastructure for carrying on work in a company? I struggle hard." One artist, who had just celebrated her company's success during their 10th anniversary season, provided a striking example of the very real financial struggle of the dance community in the current funding climate: "Funders don't understand...I was a waitress until two months ago."

The general discussion about funding touched on several areas of concern in Chicago including the political nature of the city, the disparity of support for large and small companies, the alienation of suburban organizations, and the lack of interaction with funders. There was hearty agreement in one focus group when an artist referred to Chicago as "such a political town." This artist had lived in other countries where "art is the thing" and found that everything in Chicago is "roots related," expressing frustration at only being able to access funding mainly because of ethnic heritage, due to the way that funding is structured. An artist with an organization based in the suburbs said, "It's been difficult to get credibility with many of the foundations because of our location, which is viewed as an affluent suburb." The side effect of this problem, as this artist said, is that in order to get funding, the organization is forced into outreach programs "that don't necessarily have any connection to their artistic vision and mission." These outreach programs become merely a strategy to provide the artist with "a way to get funds for survival," and are not necessarily fueled by an honest desire to reach out to the community. Another artist countered with suggestions about how to use outreach to an organization's own benefit: "We have to use those outreach opportunities to further our artistic abilities. We train young dancers who may want to become artistic directors or just perform. We use those outreach [opportunities] as a platform. We try to stay as creative as possible."

Use of Funds

If I had money, I would pay dancers more for the time they do put in. More money would not mean asking people to do more but, just filling in the ways in which people are already working but not being compensated.

As reflected in the surveys about budgets above, when asked hypothetically what they would do with funding if they had it, *a number of artists said that their primary focus would be to adequately compensate their dancers.* As one said, "I think that's the biggest thing" because, as another stated, "we do ask a lot of them." For the smaller companies, "Money for the artists is needed so they can make a living and spend time in the studio." One participant explained why

paying artists should be the first concern: “I know you guys are interested in getting the work out there, but if you don’t have the artists doing the work... you gotta pay the artists to keep them on.” This finding was confirmed by the statistics above, which show that even given their limited budgets, 94% still pay their dancers.

Funding for help with administration was also emphasized. One artist with an established company spoke about their site specific project, which includes outreach to teachers, and commented that “These multilayered support projects are terrific. But that doesn’t lessen my load of what has to be done. If I got another [CCT] grant, it would be for administration.” Other participants mentioned the need for advertising, a workshop on boutique booking, and “a long-running show, more than one weekend, enough time to get a review and get people here, at somewhere larger than Links Hall, [but] not as big as Ruth Page.”

Connections between Funders and Artists

It seems there is no foundation that is absolutely there with the artist...If you’re a funder, how are you taking a broader look at what’s in the city, who’s making art, how are they contributing to the social climate just by making themselves accessible?

Of major concern, throughout the discussion, was the lack of connection between artists and funders and a genuine desire to increase their understanding of artists and the issues they face. Though some artists agreed that funders do come to see their work in performance, they wondered if funders’ interest was more in the art or the impact, as one asked: “Why do they come? Are they coming to see the show or how it impacts the community?” Several proposed that, in order to reach a point where funders understand the value of the work, genuine relationships have to be built. One artist agreed, but urged others to look at the problem from the funders’ perspective: “What doesn’t happen is the conversation...In my mind, the foundation has a large structure, but often it’s one person in an office, not a huge organization...How often do we call them up and let them know what’s going on? There’s a possibility for more communication.” One artist credited the Chicago Community Trust as a catalyst for dance funding: “There has been an impulse from the Trust, so many opportunities. I got [funding from] Cheney and Driehaus. It has been great. If CCT support for dance goes away, it will be rough.”

Artists pointed to funding disparities, which came largely from their connections or lack thereof. One artist told a story about how when a major dance company in Chicago needed money, they simply called a funder, asked for \$50,000, and got it: “There’s always some big wig that can get the money, but it leaves the little guys out in the cold. I was irked that people had connections and could work it like that.” Others offered advice for coping with the system, based on their own success; as one said, “We’d like to think the process and infrastructure is equitable and fair... but we know it’s not...Once an organization establishes relationships, it has to realize that you’ve got to cultivate from within your own community if you’re going to survive at all. Then you can open doors to other funding.” Others who had maintained small companies for years felt caught between the gap of the new/exciting and the large/established: “It seems to me that after you have been around awhile you become typecast, people feel they know who you are and what you do and there is no room to move within that perceived role. It is easier [for funders] to look at a newer organization, foresee the difficulties it will encounter, and provide less costly services to help navigate past the first three to five years.”

The Nonprofit Question

There are gaps in the whole system. There are a small number of funders you can apply to when your company is organized in a certain way and at a certain size, and then there's a hole.

In every focus group, there was discussion about how the financial squeeze is even tighter on independent artists due to the fact that the mechanisms for accessing foundation, corporation, and government funding are based on the model of the nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. In Chicago, the support available to unincorporated artists is very limited: “If your artistic sensibility... doesn't ask for a certain infrastructure, if you're like a painter who works feverishly for four or five months and then goes to Jamaica... there's a gap there too, for support of wonderfully creative artists who don't want or need to create a business.” In the focus groups, several advocated for the validity of the “model” of being an independent artist: “I feel like my position is to be a free agent, an individual, that's how I want to run my life as a dancer... that's the value I hold... My view of the dance artist is more similar to a painter or sculptor: they're the artist, they make the art, they're not part of an ensemble. I'm not interested in starting a company or an organization.” Another artist expressed frustration with the dominant funding model in Chicago: “I don't want to become a nonprofit. I want to do my art. It doesn't seem viable in this city.”

Several artists recounted their personal experiences with nonprofit incorporation and agreed that although they may have more access to certain types of support, their administrative burden is greatly increased. One artist who was about to try the nonprofit route was aware of the added responsibilities it would bring: “For grants, there's only one or two out there for individual artists, and that's why I'm trying to start a dance company, but then I get into other issues of board members and grant writing.” Another artist spoke about the effect that creating her nonprofit company has had: “I love [my company], but it's pulled me out of the dance community because of the time I have to spend doing my IRS reporting and bookkeeping. Even creatively it's pulled me out of the larger dance community.”

Comparisons to Other Cities

If I could have a dream world, I would fund a DTW like in New York.

In each focus group, the discussion of the Chicago dance community's funding problems led to comparisons of the support available to independent artists in other cities. A number of artists had spent time in New York and gave examples of solutions that make surviving there as an unincorporated artist possible, whereas in Chicago, as one said, “Everyone's rushing to get a 501(c)3 after choreographing two dances,” because of the funding climate. The single most common funding-related need mentioned was fiscal sponsorship for independent artists. Several organizations that provide this crucial support to dance artists in other cities were mentioned including The Field and Dance Theater Workshop (DTW) in New York, Dance Umbrella in Austin, TX, and Dancers Group in San Francisco, CA. The discussion of what works for artists in other cities raised an idea for one focus group participant who said that, “Creating something that would connect our awareness with what's going on in other parts of the country to compare notes would be helpful.”

Participants drew most of their positive examples of funding from New York because, as one said, “There are a lot more independent artists, people in their fifties who never incorporated because you don’t have to do it there. There’s more freedom as an independent artist.” One artist explained why the services provided by organizations like DTW make being an independent artist possible: “If you don’t have a 501(c)3, you can access publicity, addresses, and fundraise through DTW... you have to pay a membership fee for it, but the returns [are] huge.” DTW’s workshops on topics such as “How to Find a Manager” and “How to Use iMovie” were also praised as valuable for artists who don’t have administrative staff and need to learn how to do everything themselves. The commitment to DTW on the part of one participant was clear, as evidenced by her membership in the organization until recently, despite living in Chicago: “I was so impressed with their membership services, because they offer booklets that are themselves worth the membership. If I were going to start a service organization I would look very hard at what they offer as a model. Their handbooks are tools for younger organizations. The press handbook lists a press release and a PSA example, shows you how to do it... That is 20 hours of [work for] an intern!” Similarly for another artist, if she were given a major grant, creating an organization like DTW would be first on her list: “I had this full-length piece when I was not part of a company. I knew it was going to take a big cast and I’d have to find funding, and I knew I had to make a 501(c)3 to do it [in Chicago.] If I were in New York, I [would] not have a problem.”

Presenting and Booking

There’s no presenter here, taking our work to the next level.

New York also offers more mid-level performance options than Chicago. As one artist said, “They have PS 122, The Kitchen and Joyce Soho.” In addition, “It’s very difficult to self-present here [in Chicago]. It’s difficult to get people to come and see our work.” Another artist who had attended the Association of Performing Arts Presenters conference in 2004 was amazed at how “young choreographers were being showcased with what was ‘starter work’ and yet they have these opportunities that I haven’t had in 20 years, and it happens in New York.” The main difference in Chicago is that, in her opinion, “There aren’t many people who book dance in Chicago... whereas in New York there are many agents and a lot of dance.” For this reason, one participant described “presence at booking conferences” as a burning issue in terms of services. As she said, “We cannot [afford to] go to conferences. But we do have information and residencies and know about tech riders... what do we do with this?” This artist also mentioned the impact that a visit last year from Ivan Sygoda of Pentacle in New York had had on her awareness of the need for more presenting opportunities, underscoring the importance of exchange between cities and learning from successful models. She praised the value of the connection she’d made to Sygoda and gave an example of how this relationship is already creating new opportunities for her: “Ivan was here and I stayed in contact with him and I just got an email from him saying ‘send me a video.’”

Services in Chicago

Artists were asked a series of questions about their usage of services.

1. Artists' Usage of Service Organizations

Artists were given a list of service organizations and asked which ones they had accessed. *Half or more of the artists had used services from the same six organizations. The remaining nine organizations have been used by 20% or fewer of participants.* The top six organizations utilized by 50% or more of the participants appear in the chart below, followed by others that were utilized by fewer artists. The organization that had served the largest number of artists was the Chicago Dance & Music Alliance (CDMA). The checklist that was given to artist can be found in Appendix J.

Number of Artists Who Selected Organization		Organization
28	80%	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance
23	66%	Links Hall
22	63%	Lawyers for the Creative Arts
20	57%	Arts & Business Council of Chicago
19	54%	Department of Cultural Affairs
19	54%	Donors Forum of Chicago
7	20%	CPAs for the Public Interest
6	17%	League of Chicago Theatres
4	11%	Nonprofit Financial Center
3	9%	Black Ensemble Theater
1	3%	African American Arts Alliance
1	3%	International Latino Cultural Center
1	3%	Music and Dance Theater Chicago, Inc.
0	0%	Puerto Rican Arts Alliance
5	14%	Total number of artists who listed other organizations including: Casa Aztlan, Mexican Fine Arts Museum, IL Arts Alliance, Arts Bridge, ABC Arts Marketing Advanced Training, Dance Theater Workshop, Athenaeum Theater, Dance Center of Columbia College. No more than two artists listed any one of these.

2. Impressions of Specific Services and Organizations

Artists were then given a copy of the Comparative Document and asked three questions about their opinions of services offered:

1. Have you utilized services from the organizations that are listed?
2. If you have, what have you thought of those services? Comment on their quality.
3. If you have not, why have you not utilized them?

Artists who had not utilized services were asked for details, such as if they:

- Knew that the specific services existed.
- Were concerned about eligibility to obtain services, such as budget size, nonprofit status, etc.

- Faced barriers such as limits in staffing, time, etc.
- Obtained services in another way, such as from a family member or friend.
- Didn't need, could not afford, or were not sure how to use these services.
- Had any other reasons for not accessing services, or had or no opinion.

Links Hall. More than 65% of participants had used Links Hall's services including rehearsal space, advocacy, and performance opportunities. Artists described Links Hall as a great place for performances because they help with infrastructure, including technical assistance and marketing. It was clear that it was an important resource for independent artists, because as one said, "I think Links is a great opportunity for emerging artists who want to self produce. It's cheap and easy." One service mentioned specifically was the "e-weekly" which one artist saw as an important communication resource for her immediate modern dance community: "It's an announcement of cool things that are happening." One artist described her personal experiences with being commissioned and presented by Links as mostly positive, but noted that "They just don't have enough money to do enough publicity and promotion...I did a mentoring project with four choreographers and had people saying that it was the best thing they'd seen in years. But I should have sent out my own postcard. There was also limited tech set up." Despite these shortcomings, the overall value of Links Hall to this artist was clear: "I so admire what they are doing and their intentions. I want to help them."

Arts and Business Council. The discussion about the Arts and Business Council (ABC) was the most positive of all of the service organizations discussed. Participants in each of the four focus groups praised the workshops and seminars offered by ABC, which one described as "stimulating and informative." A few participants talked about their experiences using ABC for strategic planning, fundraising or finding volunteers. Several talked about a grantwriting workshop where "lots of little technical things boiled down to one central idea by the end of the day" and a marketing workshop that allowed "time for people to interact and ask questions." One participant described his experience with volunteers: "Specific project volunteers have been fabulous. They're professional...They try to match someone who's versed in what you're trying to do. The strategic planner was a good listener [and] she had experience with other arts organizations." The board development services they provide were also praised by many. ABC was referred to as helpful and economical, and two artists illustrated their success in the program by saying that the board members they found through ABC are still with them today. One artist had mixed experiences with ABC's On the Board program: "We have done it two times. The first time resulted in a great board member...The more recent experience was not as good...They had a Q&A rating exercise [and] I did not feel it had the level of depth we needed."

The area that generated the most discussion was ABC's marketing services. Several mentioned a recent email marketing seminar in which they learned a lot. One artist who had positive experiences described it as "an opportunity to concentrate on issues of audience development and get the whole organization behind the idea of marketing." In her case, a grant supported consultation that "provided an opportunity for us to look at our success in audience development and the relationship between money spent and what you can get...how it manifests in ticket sales and awareness of the general public."

However, a number of mixed comments about ABC came from artists whose organizations were small or just starting out. They discussed how ABC's board development services were not

designed with them in mind, and how they were turned away “because we weren’t as far along as they needed us to be.” To utilize the On Board program, organizations must have a strategic plan, separate executive and artistic directors, and a board that is already functioning. The problem was that artists were not made aware of these requirements when they scheduled appointments with ABC, and were disappointed that their time had been wasted. One artist found out the hard way: “I went there myself and they asked ‘Where’s the rest of your organization?’ and at that time it was [my family members and] they weren’t coming. It was a very embarrassing experience for me because I didn’t realize there was that limitation.” Others noted that ABC did not seem aware of the ways the dance field works and felt that ABC works on “a business model, not an artist’s model.”

Lawyers for the Creative Arts. More than half of participants had utilized Lawyers for the Creative Arts (LCA) and there seemed to be an equal number of endorsements and reservations. Among those with positive experiences, three had used LCA for nonprofit incorporation or to learn about the process. These participants mentioned the quick turnaround time of two days, the helpful class about starting a 501(c)3, and an application fee that was a real bargain at \$75. Others had had positive experiences with LCA in getting visas for artists and researching artist agreements. One artist had learned about the majority of services available in Chicago from a booklet given to her by LCA. However, there were some problems with LCA’s services. Summing it up, one participant said, “LCA is well intentioned, just not well organized.” One artist had to go elsewhere to incorporate because though they do have skilled lawyers, “They have a very long waiting list, and the turnaround time to get incorporated was a year!” Another artist said that the workshop mainly consisted of being taught to fill out forms step by step, with little personal attention: “They won’t meet with you individually anymore. It was worth it, but not for \$75. The lawyer didn’t seem to know about the other models available to artists rather than the nonprofit.”

Department of Cultural Affairs. Participants had used the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) for a range of services including board development, fundraising and promotional materials when they participated in performance events at the Chicago Cultural Center. Two participants had received funding from DCA, and one of those had found ongoing support for a kids program and choreography for certain projects. Two participants mentioned Arts Flash, and while one thought it was helpful because it listed ABC and DFC workshops, the other found it to be ineffective.

Donors Forum of Chicago. More than half of participants had utilized Donors Forum Chicago (DFC) to get information about funders, and several had positive comments about their experiences. Participants called DFC “a great resource for finding out [about] funding resources” and a place to get “honed information and data.” Positive comments were made about the helpfulness of DFC’s librarians, the website and the workshops offered such as the ABCs of Grantwriting. One participant commented that DFC is “overwhelming” and suggested that “It would be nice if there was some categorization of what was helpful within the dance community. It seems like there could be a few hours that could be saved.”

CPAs for the Public Interest. Not many had utilized CPAs for the Public Interest, and those who commented on it had widely divergent experiences. One artist described herself as “hugely disappointed.” More than a year after approaching CPAs and going through the application

process, this artist had still never heard from the volunteer and was never matched with a replacement and said, “We’re still searching for an accountant. I’ve been getting books from the library and trying to train myself. I called CDMA for a recommendation, those didn’t pan out. Arts work is so specific for accounting. Most accountants either are [arts or nonprofit related] or...don’t want to deal with it.” Several reported similar experiences of long waiting periods that did not result in finding an accountant. Another artist, however, had a very different and positive experience with CPA: “We went through the first round of bookkeeping and taxes. It was a really good experience. Our person does everything now, she’s completely self-sufficient. The volunteer was very generous and came over a couple of months.”

Dance Chicago. Though not technically a service organization, artists made a few comments about Dance Chicago, probably because they felt that providing a large number of performance opportunities was in and of itself an important service. The general feeling seemed to be that the organization plays an important role in providing an opportunity for small or emerging companies to come together and show their work on the same stage. As one participant said, “Dance Chicago has been instrumental in bringing the groups together...it is the only place where they’ve brought in a potpourri of folk to participate in their festival and expose people to smaller groups. For some it has worked out well.” Though the sheer opportunity to perform was valued, there were some reservations. Though one artist recognized Dance Chicago as the only place where she gets to see the work of a lot of artists in one night, she called it “a smorgasbord thing” and observed that “I don’t get a really intense feeling from what I see.” Another referred to the difficulty involved in trying to get on a stage in Dance Chicago as the reason for not participating in years. Another artist made comments that showed his understanding of both the validity of an opportunity like Dance Chicago and the need for different options: “We started at Dance Chicago. It was very helpful when [we] first did it. It became something that... reflects all these people who are going to be represented...and it begins to diminish the value of the art in the process.”¹¹

Chicago Dance and Music Alliance. Despite being the service organization that the most participants had utilized, discussion about the Chicago Dance and Music Alliance suggested that the organization is not adequately serving the needs of the dance artists in the focus groups. Several positive comments about CDMA focused on the newsletter as a vehicle for posting jobs, audition notices, and funding deadlines, as well as the joint advertising that is offered. But there were reservations about the newsletter’s limited content and the fact that it is rarely published on time. One artist wondered if music may take priority over dance in the organization’s programming. Another was concerned about staff’s inflexibility and apparent lack of interest in listening to, and acting upon, feedback that is given about services provided. Realizing she had not been made aware of many of the services available in Chicago, one participant who had previously been a member of DTW in New York said, “I’m disappointed by what I got for my \$100 membership [at CDMA].” The organization does house some information, “but you have to go find it,” indicating that it is not as accessible as it could be. Regarding service provision in general, one participant felt that, “CDMA should be doing this” as a regular part of their services, referring to the Comparative Document, rather than an outside consultant. Other concerns about CDMA that were pointed out by artists included the meager resource center and

¹¹ According to John Schmidt of Dance Chicago, these comments are not representative of the full scope of artists that Dance Chicago serves, nor its impact on artists and audiences who reside in the suburbs.

referrals that didn't pan out. Several discussed the website, which they found to be "difficult to navigate," as one said. Another artist said that her organization is a member, but does not use the website services because, "I don't think audiences go there for information."¹²

Why Were Services Not Being Used?

What became abundantly clear in focus groups is that many artists had not utilized the bulk of services that are available in Chicago. When asked why they had not used the services, artists cited a number of reasons.

Most participants had not used the majority of services due to a lack of time and staff support. Because only 13 of the 35 participants have paid staff, and of those only 4 have full-time staff, most are by and large the sole or primary administrative agents of their organizations. Many agreed that time was the biggest deterrent, because just contacting and working with a service provider takes quite a bit of administrative time. As one explained, for other artists "Their capacity is not grown to the level where they can access and maintain or deepen the relationships with the service organizations." Other comments spoke to the participants' tight schedules and the pressure of looming deadlines: "I've got to be writing the grant, not attending a workshop to figure out how to write the grant." The financial reality of being a dance artist in Chicago made one artist feel that "I end up having to choose between my major source of income and going to these events" such as educational workshops.

Others cited the tradeoffs between the cost of services and the limitations of volunteer support. Some services, such as workshops or memberships, are too expensive, especially when they are being paid for out of the artist's pocket. One artist whose organization has reached a place of

¹² According to a response from Matthew Brockmeier: "The assertions cited in this paragraph run counter to the feedback we have received directly from constituents, and the amorphous nature of some of the comments makes it difficult to frame a pertinent response. [Regarding the newsletter:] The newsletter has consistently received positive responses, both from members and others. It does indeed have a somewhat irregular publication schedule, but that is generally due to the timing of information that is to be included. The frequency was reduced to a bi-monthly publication for two primary reasons: 1) there have been far fewer positions available (a primary content area) over the past 18 months or so than at any time since the early 1990's; and 2) much of the content is available to many of the recipients of the newsletter through the website. [Regarding dance as a priority:] Our priority is serving all of our constituents, in the process taking advantage of opportunities that will assist specific segments of the membership. Most of these special opportunities over the past couple of years have addressed needs in the dance community. [Regarding staff:] This is difficult to respond to, in that it is not specific. That said, this runs counter to our ongoing efforts to respond constructively to suggestions and comments on our work. If we don't agree, we will respond and attempt to determine whether concerns are warranted. The Alliance's board and/or executive committee routinely reviews significant concerns. [Regarding information provision and staff assistance:] It is puzzling in that we have staff who will respond to any inquiries. We don't make people dig through information, but provide either the information or suitable referrals if we don't have the answer ourselves. [Regarding service provision in general:] CDMA is always willing to undertake suitable projects, which have included such varied studies as the space needs of performing arts organizations in the Chicago area and the information needed by teachers in public schools to provide suitable instruction using arts organizations as supplemental support for their curricula. [Regarding referrals:] As indicated above, CDMA makes referrals, and attempts to solicit feedback on those referrals at all times (we ask that, if referrals don't pan out or are inappropriate, the individual get back in touch with us to follow up beyond that initial referral). [Regarding the website:] The first comment, on difficulty of navigation, runs counter to most feedback we've received. The second [regarding number of hits] is demonstrably untrue, in that the site consistently has more than 15,000 visits a month, and has had well over 100,000 page views in the Performance Guide section alone [in February and March of 2005]. A number of smaller organizations that are using a combination of the website and CDMA's cooperative advertising offerings are finding increasing audiences, at least in what they tell us. It is probably also worth noting that the Alliance's site was constructed to encourage crossover between dance and music audiences, with default settings in the Performance Guide that mix performances from all disciplines."

stability said that, despite their ability handle the work administratively, they had not accessed many of the services because “The key services we need, we know we need to pay for them. In working with the service organizations, sometimes you are working at a disadvantage... sometimes you don’t get the full return through the volunteer nature of their organizations. With the paid services, you get people who will give you the undivided attention that payment brings.”

A variety of other reasons were given as to why artists had not accessed services. Some independent artists had not accessed services because being incorporated as a 501(c)3 organization is a preliminary requirement for many of them. In some cases, artists didn’t know that the services were available, or they already had access to services offered by organizations, such as by having a lawyer or CPA on their board. One of the main problems, as expressed by one, was that “None of these organizations are artist-centered. For a small to mid-sized company, you need the artist-centered perspective.” For several artists, it was more a feeling of insecurity that prevented them from approaching an organization for a service. As one artist said regarding communication with service providers, “I don’t understand what they’re saying and they don’t understand what I’m saying...They don’t want me wasting their time. It makes me nervous to talk to them.”

Several artists whose companies had been in existence for a while had developed their own means of accessing services: “We explored these things when the company was forming, but haven’t gone back in the several intervening years to see if there was something we could use.” As another who has been around for 10 years said:

Our ingrained response when recognizing a need within our own organization is not to look outside for help but to find creative solutions to the hurdles to maintain our organizations and nurture our artistry...A lot of what is offered as “assistance” to smaller arts groups is often stuff we already know how to do or have found some creative solution around. I have been referring to [my organization] as a ‘small middle-aged’ dance group, one that many foundations and service organizations don’t know what to do with.

3. Services Desired by Artists

Artists were given a list of types of services and asked which they would utilize if provided.¹³ The list of services appears in Appendix K. Clearly, these services were of great interest to the participants. Half or more of the artists felt that they would use more than two-thirds of the services. The top 10 responses that appear on the chart below in bold print are of interest to at least two thirds of participants. After the votes were collected, the group discussed the choices they had made and their comments appear below the chart (not all service categories were discussed). Finally, in order to be sure that the list was inclusive to their needs, artists were asked about what services were important to them that might be missing from the list.

¹³ This list was adapted from a similar instrument and process that was used in Washington, DC.

Service Category	Number of Artists Who Would Use
<i>COMMUNICATION SERVICES</i>	
About performances	26 74%
About spaces	23 66%
Dance listserv	22 63%
Collaborative marketing options	20 57%
Website & database management	18 51%
Press relations	17 49%
Half-price tickets	15 43%
Audience development	14 40%
<i>ADVOCACY SERVICES</i>	
About artists to funders, corporations & municipal agencies	29 83%
About dance to general public	21 60%
For peer groups	15 43%
<i>NETWORKING SERVICES</i>	
Resource bank of skills & networking	30 86%
Monthly peer roundtables	23 66%
Dance community meeting space	19 54%
Electronic support group(s)	11 31%
<i>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES</i>	
Health insurance & retirement plan access	31 89%
Administrative help tbd	24 69%
Board development	22 63%
Work-in-progress showings	17 49%
Financial management	16 46%
Mentorship & one-on-one artist interaction	14 40%
Monthly workshops for artists & administrators	13 37%
Teacher training-discussion and certification information	5 14%

Communication Services

About Performances. As one artist said, the need to communicate about performances is important both outside and inside the dance community: “I feel like most of the people I’m seeing at my shows are friends and family of the performers...I feel a lack of artists in the audience.” One participant mentioned that she would definitely use a dance listserv but questioned how it would work: “Am I still going to send out my color attachment with the listserv? Will I still spend the time to send out my 800 emails? At what point does this replace or augment my efforts? It’s hard to know...how to manage effort and work.” Collaborative marketing was seen as a valuable service because of the difficulty of getting the word out about performances as a small organization. The opportunity to share costs would allow artists to reach a greater audience: “Collaborating on a Reader ad with three or four others would be ideal because I can’t afford a \$1,200 ad each month.” One artist suggested a different strategy to develop audiences for dance: “A performance journal...on the art form would help...something permanent where there’s good writing on the subject, where audiences and other artists could learn.”

Press Relations. Artists called for more knowledge about dance and sensitivity to the community’s situation on the part of the press. But the crux of the issue is identifying the best way to do that. While some wished to educate the press about dance in Chicago through a workshop or symposium about dance writing, there were doubts about whether this strategy would be effective. As one participant said, “I don’t know if it’s possible to train the press on dance. I would like to establish more press contacts who are willing to write about dance.” Another artist felt that the idea of trying to educate the press about dance was “presumptuous” and that their attitude would be “Don’t tell me how to be a critic.” Citing a discourse between the dance community and the press at Links Hall following a negative review several years ago, one participant said, “It was good to sit and talk with the press and tell them our concerns about how they view us. We got direct quotes that ‘If [your] art was better, we’d review you more.’ The critics got defensive but it was a conversation. It was a first step.” Another artist who had attended that meeting acknowledged that there is now some deeper understanding of the community on the part of the press. Another spoke about the need for the press to have a greater understanding of different dance forms and suggested that artists could send information about their particular genres of dance prior to a performance.

Website & Database Management. Some artists expressed interest in developing a website that would pull together information about the multitude of dance entities in order to communicate more effectively with funders, audiences, and dancers. As one said, “If the information were collated, or even generally available about all of these things in one place, that would be amazing.” Another offered that “It would be useful to have a general website for the entire dance community to put at the bottom of your poster.” The key to a new website’s usefulness, said one, would be keeping the site up to date and providing “better information than I could get myself by doing a little more work.” Another related idea was to create some kind of master list or collaborative planner for the dance community online to avoid overlapping performance schedules, in order to both allow audiences to see more dance and to allow artists to see each other’s work.

Audience Development. Audience development was an interest for some participants and as one said, the interest is in “knowing who my audience is, how to develop it further, encouraging artists to see each other’s work, and contributing to public knowledge.” The idea of offering half-price tickets was ranked last in communication services, and met with mixed responses. Some felt that since they are already charging a reasonable price of \$12-15 for a performance, which is comparable to going to a movie, half-price tickets may not add much incentive: “If you’re not coming [to a performance] for \$12, then you’re not coming. I don’t think money is the issue at that point.”

Advocacy Services

We do not have people who stand outside of our community who... promote artists, like a David White [formerly at DTW]... We go to magical places, and we come back, and we’re still right where we were... I don’t know how you gather that energy in a community. But we lack it and need it...an advocate to promote not just Hubbard Street or Muntu, but the second level of dance in the community.

About dance to funders, corporations, and agencies. Focus group participants were most interested in advocacy services targeted to provide funders, corporations, and municipal agencies with information about Chicago artists.

Mapping Project. Several artists praised the Mapping Project because it was designed to address “the realities of the field versus the paradigmatic expectations about what a company should be.” The project earned high marks from this artist who said, “I found it to be really interesting and well crafted in the language they used about the expectations about what they thought going in and what they found. The common markers of ‘professional’ don’t hold true for dance. Such as are you paid full-time to dance.” Another participant had utilized the data available through the Mapping Project and said, “If you’re a member [of COMA] you can get the addresses of the schools, the artists, everything.”

About dance to general public. Advocating about dance to the general public was also a major concern. One suggested that there is a need to find different ways to engage the community in the art work: “There’s something that’s not a ‘before show talk’ or an ‘artbeat’ that’s missing. Integrating it would help people recognize the language of the body as a part of life. To contribute to public knowledge in the art form... there’s something that’s not marketing that’s about revealing the art form. It’s a tall order.”

The discussion of advocacy to the general public led back to comments about the Chicago press and their minimal coverage of dance. As one said, “We don’t have a community media person that tells the city of Chicago that this is an art town, and ‘Wow, isn’t it great!’ We don’t have that New York Times person giving phenomenal reviews.” Complaints about the dance critics in Chicago were many; as one said, “We don’t *have* dance critics. We have theater critics who try to review dance from the point of view of a theater critic” and another added that “They really don’t show enthusiasm for learning about dance.” Another described the situation this way: “There is no question that dance is the stepchild in the newspapers in terms of the space they give to dance... There are times when [the papers] overlook something that’s going on locally because of some large touring company that’s coming through.” The problem, however, as some

acknowledged, may be even larger: “Isn’t it more about how dance is valued, and if people are actually going to pay others to write about dance?” A solution posed in one focus group was to reach out to “curious and energetic” writers between the ages of 15 and 25 who could learn about the dance community and develop into advocates in the future: “Working with people young in their press careers, exposing them to the art form, and communicating something about dance history might be promising long-term.” Participants agreed that the benefits of a better relationship between the Chicago press and the dance community could turn the press into a strong source of support.

For Peer Groups. A lesser concern for focus group participants was advocacy services targeted at peer groups. One participant referenced the Dancers Forum Compact, as a possible solution for greater communication within the dance community; this publication was developed by a group of dancers in New York and disseminated by DTW. It was created to articulate the working artistic relationship between dancers and choreographers and might be a good place for the Chicago community to start: “I love it, read it and shared it with dancers. It did a very good job of communicating something that cannot be labeled or quantified. There’s no institutional procedure that houses the relationship between a choreographer and a dancer.”

Networking Services

Forums/Roundtables

All of these [services] are important, but only if I had a real connection with the community of dancers. It would be a blast if we had a forum where people get to know the community and get to hear the issues... for people to build relationships.

Peer roundtables or forums were ranked as the second most important networking service by participants. However, this service received the highest level of enthusiasm and most discussion of all services considered. All artists seemed to agree that an opportunity to build relationships among peers would provide a basis for future collaboration in the dance community. Participants used words like “organic,” “warm,” “non-threatening,” “friendly,” “not competitive,” and “inviting” to describe the type of environment they envisioned for regular community meetings. As one said, having a forum for the community is incredibly important because, “I spend a lot of time talking to myself...the sheer luxury of being able to get together and talk as a group is helpful.”

Overall, the desire for networking seemed to be driven by the need to better understand the issues that artists face, through interaction, exchange, and reflection. Many mentioned their curiosity about how other artists work, the challenges they face and what they’ve learned over the years. One artist with a fairly new company said, “The issues we’re dealing with now are the things everyone is talking about, so hearing other’s perspectives is good. It makes me feel better, like we’re not doing something wrong.” For another artist, the need to communicate extended to a broad group: “When I get across the table from artists we have a million things to talk about. Even though [their] work is very different from mine, I learn from talking [to them].” The desire to get to know peer artists personally and artistically was illustrated, artists thought, by the connections that were being built by the focus group itself: “I’m getting to know you today. The

thing that will make it organic and real is that interpersonal connection.” One artist suggested that such forums could also provide a mechanism for finding skilled administrative staff.

Several stressed the importance of an inclusive atmosphere because as one cautioned, some in the community already feel excluded because they weren’t invited to “the first table” as they called it (referring to the Advisory). To counter that problem, they said, “You want to go out of your way and make [the forum] representative of all the people in it. People must be truly willing and be open to go beyond fear.” If the forum is organized with an eye toward inclusiveness, as this artist assessed, “People can be authentic and speak their truth and try to find their voices.” Another participant stressed the importance of following through with the ideas generated, specifically through the leadership of a strong organization like the Trust, which could take action immediately.

Discussion about how to structure forums and how often to have meetings took place in only one focus group, so more discussion is needed to determine what would best serve the community. Several stressed the importance of incorporating art into the meetings through having informal performances. As one said, “The idea of communing and discussing in a space...where there’s also art happening...not just business happening. It’s easy to forget those things are connected.” Another agreed saying, “The only thing lacking in Chicago is the excitement of the artwork. That never happens [though because] we’re all busy doing this and that.”

Several mused about the potential outcomes of a successful forum, including one who thought such collaboration could help dance advocacy efforts in the state and the community. Another artist envisioned the forum as a group of strong community leaders saying, “I think we’ll create our own arsenal of dance spearheads. If we can create an awareness about the art form of dance [all dance organizations] will benefit.”

Resource Bank. The most popular networking service discussed was the creation of a resource bank that could match people with certain skill sets to artists who need their services. Participants were excited about such an exchange as a way to connect to each other and find new resources in the community. As one said, “It would be great, maybe it’s compiled and laid out on a website [with] a place to post resumes... As an example, if we all rely on the same costume designer, there’s a sameness that appears in the community. It neutralizes things. If we had a larger bank... we live in a vast city with a lot of resources and artists.” Another spoke about the importance of a resource bank because of the time that it could save artists: “There are a ton of costume designers and lighting people. I’m always connecting with Joffrey or Hubbard because I know they have a lot of information. We end up wasting a lot of time on research. [A resource bank could] simply include a five-sentence blurb: who they are, where they went to school, what their forte is. Time is of the essence, we need to get the most out of our time. I have my own network, but that doesn’t do the community any good.”

Meeting Place. Ranked third by participants was a meeting space for the dance community. Many mentioned how, compared to other cities, Chicago lacks community centers. One participant spoke of the need for a focal point for the dance community as her top priority and described what is needed as “a multi-capacity organization to support contemporary work.” Another provided an example of a center in Minneapolis (Hennepin Center) that is “an entire

building where artists have studios” and asked, “Why can’t we identify housing or community property for artists and let them come together?” Others echoed this idea, calling for a place “where independent artists could be rehearsing at the same time, interfacing with the community...a space that could support four companies at one time so they could interact.” One acknowledged that the space might have to start small, but suggested, “Maybe it starts as an office...and it mushrooms into something with rehearsal and performance space.” Looking broadly at the idea of service provision for the dance community, one artist said, “What we’re looking for is the big center buildings where we can all go and work together [and] build community. Then these organizations make sense to us. Without us being strong as a unit, we don’t know how to make it work.”

What may make the lack of a meeting place such a contentious issue for the Chicago dance community is the fact that they once had it in Moming, an organization that they lost in the early 90s. One participant who had been around during the Moming days referred to that time period as her “hey day” and said that “nothing has compared to that since.” Artists spoke with appreciation of how Moming incorporated an art center, gallery shows, and a performance series inside one building, allowing for more interaction and overlap between different artists and audiences. Comparing Moming to Links Hall, which was referred to as the most similar organization in Chicago today, one artist said, “The size of Moming was a little more appealing [than Links Hall] for those of us farther along in our work, a place where the community can hang out...and experience other art forms.” One suggested that making some changes at Links Hall could play an important role until a new art center can be created: “Maybe we could look at Moming [and] what worked there, and what doesn’t work at Links and...find some middle ground.”

Electronic Support Groups. “Electronic support groups for dance are very important. As one said, “How we communicate with funders, audience, dancers. Everything goes out electronically [for my company]. It’s crucial to tap into people who are doing that well.”

Professional Development Services

Health Insurance. Not surprisingly for people in a low-paying field dependent on the body, access to health insurance was ranked the most important professional development service. As one artist pointed out, not having access to health insurance has “a longer-term effect...It’s something that people don’t have a lot of awareness about until issues come up.” The participant who had just quit waiting tables to supporting a 10-year-old company had access to health insurance “for the first time in 15 years” and described this achievement as “a big one for me.”

Administration. The second most important professional development service was administrative help. Frequent themes in the discussion were the idea of artists maintaining a balancing act between the creative and administrative aspects of their lives, and the image of wearing multiple “hats.” This theme throughout the focus groups illustrates a real need for administrative help, which many thought could be provided by a service organization. In developing as an independent artist or small company, one artist said that “There’s a plateau you get to and you need to find someone to help you get beyond it with the administrative or management aspects.” Another added that this predicament often happens “right where the

opportunity for funding falls off...That's a challenge. You get to a size where that growth is a possibility and the opportunity for funds drops off." At this point in development, participants noted that it becomes increasingly harder to do all the administrative tasks yourself, and the result is often that you start losing artistic creativity. This rang true for one artist who lamented that "Maybe 60% of my time is administrative which is sad. 30-40% is making work." One organization recently had to eliminate its part-time managing director for budgetary reasons: "We struggled to maintain the position for three and a half years and this year for many reasons the company could not sustain a part-time 15 hour a week position." Several artists talked about how trying to make it as a nonprofit has actually been detrimental to their artistic work: "The reality of it is that it's a lot of work... If you're doing these other things, you're leaching everything out of the soil and nothing is going to grow." One artist who had successfully moved past the plateau explained the key to his success: "I had to find someone and say, 'I'm not looking for an employee but an executive partner.' Someone who's willing to invest administratively and managerially at the same level that I'm invested artistically...This person has to share a vision."

Participants gave some examples of what service organizations could do to help decrease the administrative burden on artists such as: assisting with grant preparation, including basics such as photocopying or providing basic information about deadlines. Underscoring the importance of the issue, as one of her top priorities for the dance community, one participant described how service organizations could look at what needs to happen "to help small single artistic director companies develop support and infrastructure for what they are doing." Several suggested developing some arrangements to share administrative staff, so that artists could share the financial burden and combine resources to offer a full-time administrative position.

Artists offered suggestions for ways, outside of help from a service organization, to alleviate the administrative strains of making work. One participant had found success with hiring a consultant to "find funds in the city of Chicago, [help] define who we are and what we could offer to the city and funders, and what to apply for." The key, he stressed, is that "She was *specific* to us." Another participant described her strategy of breaking the administrative work up into specific jobs for several staff people including project development, grant writing, public relations, and design, though also noted the downside: "I manage all that." She went on to describe how her income has always come from outside of her company, and that while it has its benefits, this model is also "exhausting." Another suggestion was to access volunteers or interns from places like DePaul, Columbia College and the Arts Institute. Some expressed concerns that interns only want to work with larger organizations and are short-term solutions. As one said, "My fear was what kind of investment do I want to make in somebody if they're going to leave in a semester?" If this turns out to be the case, one participant suggested identifying "no brainer" tasks like mailings that interns can complete without much instruction. However, other participants had had successful experiences with interns and as one noted, "If you work with an intern, they start to understand what you're doing and you can build your staff if they work out." One participant advanced an idea for a service that an organization could provide: "You have incredibly bright people coming out of school. If there was some program...to match these talents and substantially fund them, give them a good job with benefits...that's what artists need."

Board Development & Legal Services. Board development services were also very important to participants. Having a reliable board is a cornerstone to a healthy organization, as one said: “You look to your board to bring in people and help develop the audience, [create] financial stability.” Participants most commonly said they need help finding good board members who will commit to their organization and develop along with it. One participant explained the value of such services: “We struggle to find board members who give something to the organization. It takes a long time to cultivate them.” Another participant, however, criticized board development services that she had accessed in the past because they were not designed for the dance community: “Oh God, if I go to one more workshop that tells me what a board should look like...When you are working with a small company, you need to find people who value [your] vision and ideas. Most board members want to be part of something that has more public notoriety and visibility.” Participants mentioned the need for other legal services including advice on contracts and intellectual property rights for choreography: “There’s a lack of education about the special needs of dance in the legal realm among artists and lawyers.”

Work-in-Progress Showings. About half of focus group participants would like to see work-in-progress showings for the Chicago dance community. However, as discussed earlier, the value of these showings would come largely from the personal connection with other artists. As one said, “Work-in-progress showings are only interesting if I respect you and have a relationship with you...it’s dependent upon the relationship piece that drives it all.”

Mentorship. Though only discussed in one focus group, several felt strongly about the need for a mentorship program, as expressed by one artist: “Since my company is brand new, I do everything right now. I don’t really know what I’m doing. I have all kinds of questions and I ask people who’ve been in the business, but they don’t have the time to really address them and help me get the information.” Another participant pointed out that it’s not that more experienced artists don’t want to act as mentors, but rather, “There aren’t mechanisms to support or encourage people to become mentors. It would be helpful to have practical support for that kind of thing.” Participants in this group thought mentoring was important as a way to save time by having a kind of “big sister” to steer you in the right direction. Without having a mentor, one artist said she had to “learn by trial and error over the years [because I] didn’t know where to look, didn’t have the time, or was afraid to ask.” Another participant suggested that many different kinds of mentorships are possible between artists, or artists and administrators, or even across disciplines.

Artistry

After surveying the list of professional development services, one artist was moved to comment on what she saw as a major omission: “What about the profession of artistry? Look at all the weight around the admin!...I do see the artistry addressed in part in the work-in-progress showings and mentorships, but what about opportunities to grow as an artist...to feed the creative spirit?”

Performance Space. Though the need for space is clear, it was only discussed briefly due to time limitations. The need for a venue that is larger than Links Hall and smaller than Ruth Page came up in two focus groups where participants observed that “Two hundred seat houses just don’t

exist” and “It’s hard to find a place after Links Hall. Where do you go?” The few theaters that do fit in the needed size range are often unaffordable, not suitable for dance in terms of flooring and lighting, and not available for more than one weekend. In a discussion with critics, one artist learned that “You will not get reviewed unless you have more than one weekend because it doesn’t serve anyone well to review someone that appears two or three times in a weekend...Not being able to find these spaces that are available and affordable for more than one weekend has its repercussions.” Another told of her personal experience trying to produce a show in a theater due to the lack of dance venues: “I’ve been told by two theaters that they don’t want to book dance companies because the runs are too short...Financially, it doesn’t make sense for them to book a two-week run.” Acknowledging that creating a mid-sized venue for dance in Chicago was not likely to happen soon, one participant suggested that a first step to improving the situation would be creating a way for the community to get information “about the spaces available, especially those that are dance-friendly.”

One artist drew a connection between the success of Links Hall and the need for a place to study dance, wondering if it would be possible to build up a class program there. Reflecting on the distant past at the Dance Center, “about 50% of the population studying dance was the community at large, not matriculating students. [Dance] immediately took in a large body of people [and was] presenting more experimental companies...The proportion of community students involved [now] is not so large...there’s a loss of the integral community base.” Speaking with admiration for Links Hall—including its studio, outreach, and performance programs—this artist continued: “I keep trying to ask myself if there is a way to get together and set up a good home base for really good modern classes...Can we [replicate] the original impulse [of Moming]?...That is missing here and would really lift and solidify the technical ability of dancers. I see dancers moving like crazy but they don’t have solid technique in their bodies.”

Final Impressions

Artists shared two final impressions that were of particular interest: 1) They were enthusiastic about being invited to the focus groups, which provided the opportunity to gather and express their viewpoints in intimate settings with other artists. Because of the lack of opportunities to gather and get to know each other, all four focus groups commented passionately about the sheer value of being called to spend time together and discuss issues of concern to them. 2) Artists were grateful to have the Comparative Document. Many did not know the specific areas of service provision that could be obtained, nor the organizations that offered those services. Therefore, already, this study has provided a useful service by familiarizing local artists with the services that are available to them.

4. Chicago Service Organizations

Introduction

In order to determine whether or not the needs of artists could be met by existing service organizations, the consultant, along with a project director, conducted interviews with the major service providers in Chicago:

Arts and Business Council
Department of Cultural Affairs
Donors Forum of Chicago
Lawyers for the Creative Arts
League of Chicago Theaters
Links Hall

In addition, individuals from the dance field who offered a unique perspective were interviewed, including Lisa Tylke, former Executive Director of the Chicago Dance Coalition, and Michele Marie White of the Sacred Dance Guild.

Interviewees were asked a series of questions about their history and capacity to serve dance, as well as their interest in serving dance in the future. Questions covered the following areas:

- Services offered and any eligibility requirements, such as budget size, nonprofit status, and membership categories. Interviewees reviewed the findings from the Comparative Document and provided corrections to ensure the accuracy of this document.
- Artists and organizations served, including budget sizes, numbers, disciplines served, and geographical areas covered by services.
- Relationships with artists, including 1) if services are tailored to need of asker and 2) if services are offered on a one-time basis or through sustained relationships with artists.
- Visibility of services, including how they are publicized and how aware the dance field was of them.
- Review of findings from the focus groups. The comments made by artists about the organization were shared and interviewees were asked to comment on what was said.
- Interest in and capacity to serve the dance field. To determine 1) what services the interviewee can offer to dance companies of a budget size less than \$50,000, and 2) if the organization is interested or able to add services for independent artists or small companies.
- Provision of specific services that were of priority to artists, including whether they do, or could, offer fiscal agency and/or health insurance to artists. (This information appears at the end of this section.)

The list of questions that were asked of interviewees can be found in Appendix L. The profiles that follow summarize the findings.

Links Hall

Interview with CJ Mitchell, Executive Director

Overview of Services Provided

At the heart of services provided by Links Hall is subsidized rental space and related support for artists to use that space, which is available to artists 24 hours a day. Other services focus on performance opportunities, artistic development and advertising. Programs include Linkages, a co-production and co-presentation format for artists with use of light and sound equipment, 10 hours of technical rehearsal, full box office services and marketing support; Link-up, a six-month residency for three young choreographers that includes space as well as both informal showings and a fully produced public performance of their work; and e-weekly, an email blast to approximately 900 people that includes information not only about upcoming performances at Links Hall, but other events around the city. Additionally, the geography of the space itself creates a sense of community because of the interaction among the artists who use Links.

Services for SMIDs and Eligibility Requirements

Links Hall serves a range of constituents from emerging artists and students to nonprofit organizations, and there are no eligibility or membership requirements to take advantage of the services. It is accessed by residents of the greater Chicago area, with more concentration of use on the North side. The artists most commonly served by Links can be described as “experimental” and “multidisciplinary,” and dance artists make up approximately two-thirds of Links Hall’s constituents.

Links Hall tailors its services to the needs of artists through three specific programs. For Linkages and Link-up, the staff works with each artist to determine their needs and priorities, such as how they want their performance to be structured, or what they want to do as an artist-in-residence. Mitchell explained: “We are flexible in terms of how artists want to work in terms of their private development time and presentations. There are some constraints due to space, but we are open to breaking out of structures.” Through its Artistic Associates program, Links gives three artists the opportunity to curate the space for one month each and tries to accommodate their vision as much as possible. For example, when one artist decided to bring performers from Europe, Links was successful in creating the necessary partnerships to make it happen. As Mitchell noted, “I am resourceful. If something is on my plate, I will find a way to make it happen, to pursue opportunities within a reasonable range.”

Mitchell felt that the dance community has a high level of awareness about the services offered due to various marketing methods including print pieces, an informative website, the e-weekly, and talking to artists on the phone. Another influential factor is the intimate space and its history, which creates a lot of generational word-of-mouth.

When asked about the most valuable service that Links Hall provides for dance organizations with budgets less than \$50,000, Mitchell cited Linkages because it provides the opportunity to pull together a presentation and let the community see an artist’s work. He noted the value of the creative time Links provides, in the form of inexpensive rehearsal space. Another positive aspect of Links is that artists can access services for one specific project or as part of a sustained

relationship over time. As Mitchell said, “You can call us up and rent for an hour, or apply for a residency through Link-up and Linkages.”

Response to Focus Group Feedback¹⁴

Mitchell was not surprised to hear the positive feedback from artist focus groups saying, “I hear all those things echoed on a day-to-day basis. I’m pleased people are saying it when I’m not in the room.”

Expanding Services to Dance

Mitchell spoke about the potential expansion of services at Links Hall as a question, primarily, of strengthening and expanding what is already in place. He gave examples of what Links could do with an increased budget, such as give Link-up choreographers in residence a stipend, decrease the space rental cost to artists for Linkages, and strengthen box office services by paying staff and introducing credit card payments. These and other ideas for expansion would be greatly enhanced by the addition of a second space, which would increase the number of companies that Links can work with and create an opportunity to dedicate more space and time to specific artists. As Mitchell summarized, “If we had a second space, the potential expands dramatically. The programs we have in place are very strong, but could be developed further.” He added that Links Hall would definitely be open to considering the addition of more services to the dance field, if appropriate avenues were identified.

Arts & Business Council

Interview with Joan Gunzberg, Executive Director, and Suzanne Connor, Director of Programming and Grants

Overview of Services Provided

The Arts and Business Council (ABC) provides services primarily in the areas of professional development, including marketing and board development. The Arts Marketing Program provides targeted marketing initiatives, such as e-coaching and market research consulting, to enhance and diversify audience development efforts in the arts. ABC conducts case studies to help artists determine what services they may need. Through the On Board program, ABC helps established organizations by recruiting, training, and placing business executives on the boards of nonprofit arts organizations. In a similar program, Business Volunteers for the Arts, ABC places small teams of business professionals on pro bono consulting projects with arts organizations. Professional development opportunities are offered continually through the Arts/Business Forums, where culture and commerce intersect on a range of topics, and through the Annual Workshop Series, Business Essentials for the Arts, where arts professionals gather to discuss critical management topics. ABC provides two assessment tools, Arts Client Assessment, which focuses on managerial evaluation for established organizations, and smARTscope Assessment, which focuses on organizational performance of small and mid-sized arts groups. In both programs, ABC provides professional consultation and interpretation of findings, and also identifies next steps for the organization. To celebrate the hard work of the community, ABC’s Annual Awards (“THE ABBYs”) recognize management excellence, leadership, volunteerism, and outstanding arts/business partnerships.

¹⁴ Refer to Focus Group Findings on Page 20.

Services for SMIDs and Eligibility Requirements

The majority of services offered by ABC are geared toward organizations that have had nonprofit status for at least three years. However, ABC's workshops are open to everyone, including individuals who are not incorporated. ABC's board development program, On Board, requires a higher level of organizational development to participate; organizations must typically hold regular board meetings, and be incorporated for at least five years. In order to take advantage of ABC's pro bono consulting services, the organization must provide a dedicated staff person to work with the consultant. ABC works with 350 organizations a year, including those that come to workshops, and just below 20% of these are dance organizations. As Gunzberg described, ABC serves "the whole range from Lucky Plush to Joffrey" and as she said, "when considering capacity building in management areas, the larger groups need it as much as the little guys." ABC primarily serves the Chicago metro area, while some artists from as far as Crystal Lake, Elgin, Naperville, Skokie and even Milwaukee take advantage of services.

ABC tailors its services to each organization through a specific evaluation process. Before using ABC's services, a group of at least three people from the organization go through an assessment in which they have to reach consensus on a variety of questions. The discussion helps them identify weaknesses and their response forms the basis for the strategic plan, which ABC helps them create. This document is a useful fundraising tool, as well as a way to determine the services needed such as meeting facilitation or a marketing plan. Staff described the importance of this evaluation saying, "The initial assessment [gives us] an understanding of the dynamic and stage of development of the organization. If it is not really an organization yet, often we send them to workshops for a while. If they have organizational structure, we set them up with the kinds of fittings that will help their lagging areas move forward." Workshops are tailored to address the current vital issues for the community, such as marketing and are dropped for one year if they are not well-attended.

Staff thought that getting the word out about services is never a problem, and in fact, clients "pour in the door." However, they acknowledged that while established organizations are aware of ABC's services, independent artists may not be. ABC's services are marketed through regular email blasts, referrals from other service organizations, ABC's website, and event listings on ArtsFlash, the city's website. Regarding the dance field's awareness, dance is included in all workshops, though in activities like On Board, the presence is not strong.

Though artists don't have to create sustained relationships with ABC, staff always try to encourage clients to think about their next steps. As staff said, "We actually monitor if they show up to workshops. We try to encourage them to go from workshops to pursue a strategic plan. Then we have an exit meeting and talk about next steps...If for example marketing is a big area for them, we try to find marketing volunteers for them...We try to make suggestions and keep the door open."

For dance organizations with budgets less than \$50,000, staff said that ABC's workshops and Business Volunteers for the Arts (BVA) program are the most valuable services. The workshop series addresses "a range of important issues identified by Chicago's arts community" and in 2004 included staff/board recruitment and retention, change management, grant writing tips and tricks, brand name awareness, e-marketing, and fundraising for board members. As part of the

Business Volunteers for the Arts program, ABC recruits, develops, and places experienced business professionals on management projects as pro bono consultants with small to mid-sized arts organizations in such areas as strategic, marketing, and financial planning. Staff admitted that one problem for small organizations interested in using BVAs is that “Board members gravitate to Joel Hall, River North, the larger well-known companies. Each year, 20-25 board members go through [the BVA program], but only two or three pick dance. More usually ask to be assigned to established organizations.”

Response to Focus Group Feedback¹⁵

Staff understood the concerns expressed about ABC in artist focus groups regarding the trouble that smaller organizations have had using services such as On Board or BVAs. It was clear from the interview that they were aware of, and had already worked to address, this shortcoming. They described how “Several years back, anyone could apply and we had more than double the arts applicants [compared to] business people...The business folks chose mission driven people. The organizations that are just so tiny cannot accommodate business folks effectively. Business people had bad experiences with small organizations and asked to be reassigned.” However, staff mapped out what ABC has done to right the situation citing a list of requirements that is now shared with organizations in an orientation, which will help small organizations choose those services that are appropriate to their level of development. As she explained, “One of the reasons we do workshops is to bring small organizations into an understanding of what it takes to run a good meeting and to diversify your recruitment process. The goal of workshops is that you walk out the door with material to put to use immediately.”

Expanding Services to Dance

When asked about adding services for independent artists or small companies, staff stated that “Our core mission is related to strengthening the business side of organizational practices. It is not about helping individual artists. All of our training programs are about the management of an organization. It is not an area where we have a lot of expertise.” They added that the workshops allow independent artists to learn about topics such as marketing or e-commerce, and noted that when clients need legal help, ABC refers them to Lawyers for the Creative Arts. Staff did offer that ABC might be able to start a chapter of the United Arts Fund¹⁶, which is sometimes part of Arts and Business Council in other cities, in order to augment efforts to raise money specifically for the arts. She candidly expressed a factor in ABC’s inability to expand services for dance saying “One concern we have is that the market for dance has been slow in Chicago relative to other cities...There is a reality, regarding the economics of it all.”

¹⁵ Refer to Focus Group Findings on Page 20.

¹⁶ United Arts Fund is similar to United Way and allows donors to designate funds from their paycheck for arts organizations.

Lawyers for the Creative Arts

Interview with William Rattner, Executive Director

Overview of Services Provided

Lawyers for the Creative Arts (LCA) provides a host of legal services to the arts community. At the center of its services is assistance in general business organization including tax exemption and incorporation issues. LCA assists artists in recruiting board members by contacting lawyers who might be interested in serving. Legal expertise is available regarding copyright, trademark, and other intellectual property matters as well as issues related to general business, contracts, landlord/tenant disputes, immigration, employment, and nonpayment. LCA's Arts Mediation Service offers private mediation of disputes within the arts community, and now through their Expanded Referrals program, LCA will help locate an attorney even for those who do not qualify for pro bono services.

Services for SMIDs and Eligibility Requirements

LCA provides legal services to individuals, who account for more than half of those served. Services are available to individuals with less than \$30,000 gross income per household, and to nonprofit organizations with budgets under \$250,000. These eligibility requirements were put in place to make sure that LCA's free services are used by those most in need. LCA serves all types of artists and Rattner estimated that LCA handles some 50 formal files for dance per year, and that there are usually two or three dance groups in each workshop. LCA is active in several states including Illinois, and recently ended their membership program to make services available to the community at large.

Rattner described how services are customized to the client saying, "We tailor it to whatever people need. There are no hoops to jump through." He listed some services that reflect the range of needs for professional assistance on the part of individual dance artists including review of contracts, nonpayment of fees, deportment, space rental contracts, legal disputes, independent contractor agreements, and graphic arts disputes. When asked about the best service that LCA can offer to dance organizations with budgets less than \$50,000 Rattner remarked, "We started Hubbard Street. That's what I say to people. [We provide a] full panoply of legal needs." Rattner characterized LCA's services as "one stop shopping" saying, "We don't do general counsel here ourselves. We are a referral agency."

Awareness of LCA's services is high among organizations, foundations, and businesses, though Rattner said that individual dance artists may not be as aware. The primary ways that LCA gets the word out about its services include the website, word of mouth through artists served, and referrals from other organizations. As he described, "Because we are the only game in town, any other service organizations will refer folks to LCA...I did legal work for almost all of them [when they started]." Now, however, LCA is undertaking an outreach program to inform artists about its services and help them realize that they need those services, which will be "broken up by art forms and geographic areas, starting with music." LCA plans to reach out to the music community through advertising and the new Chicago Music Commission. Second in line for the outreach program is film and Rattner did not indicate when they would reach out to dance.

Response to Focus Group Feedback¹⁷

In response to the mixed feedback about LCA that was gathered in artist focus groups, Rattner provided some reasons for the disorganization and long waiting times that some had experienced in the past. When he came to LCA four and a half years ago, “The place was a total shambles...It has completely turned around. It was disorganized... losing money, and not getting grants.” Regarding long wait times for clients, Rattner said that this is a problem shared among all legal service organizations. It’s a problem for LCA specifically in handling case files for 450 organizations a year and working solely on a referral basis. He explained that “I cannot make any lawyer take a case file,” though his legal director constantly works at it. When asked if LCA followed up on the quality of their legal services with clients, Rattner said they had distributed evaluation forms in the past but did not have success because of poor response from clients. When told that several artists had criticized LCA’s services for not meeting their individual needs as small dance groups, which may not fit within the typical nonprofit model, Rattner explained that the workshops are set up only for nonprofits: “We cannot talk about other models.” However, he stressed the value of workshops saying that participants get the same quality services as those in paid individual consultations.

Expanding Services to Dance

In terms of expanding services to independent dance artists and small companies, Rattner expressed his interest in increasing LCA’s reach, but also some hesitation about expanding in an appropriate way: “I am trying to grow the place...[but] I am careful not to go stepping on the toes of other organizations, such as Chicago Dance and Music Alliance and Arts and Business Council. For example, others post dance performance listings, so I wouldn’t do that...If they say can you help us set up a marketing program, that’s ABC.” When implemented for the dance community, the outreach program described earlier will enhance LCA’s services by building awareness of what is available to dance artists through a three-part process of talking to the community, distributing written self-assessments, and conducting one-on-one meetings. Rattner felt that LCA’s strongest service is providing general business knowledge to the dance community regarding pertinent issues such as employee versus freelance contracts: “I have found that people with MFAs don’t have as much business sense as those who are in business as mechanics. They think of themselves as artists [rather than business owners].”

Department of Cultural Affairs

Interviews with Janet Carl Smith, Deputy Commissioner, Cultural Programs and Karen Carolin, Cultural Programming Associate

Overview of Services Provided

The Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) offers a range of communication services to artists and companies. Arts Flash, its main communication vehicle, is a newsletter announcing performances. The Office of Tourism accepts information on programs, which are announced through an event calendar; in addition dance companies are featured on their web site, and a Brochure Center is maintained at the Chicago Cultural Center and Water Tower Place. DCA offers four grants programs. The Community Arts Assistance Program supports new and emerging artists and arts organizations in areas of professional, organizational, and artistic

¹⁷ Refer to Focus Group Findings on Page 21.

development. The City Arts Program provides general operating support. The Neighborhood Arts Program supports artists who present high-quality instructional arts programs benefiting youth, senior citizens, and people with disabilities in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods. The Cultural Outreach Program supports agencies that offer cultural programming in low- to moderate-income communities. Their Cultural Network is an informal consortium of local cultural organizations that shares information and programming ideas, and meets every six weeks. Creative Conversations is a new discussion group for emerging arts leaders, developed with Americans for the Arts, in which established arts leaders talk to emerging arts leaders. In obtaining space, DCA acts as a liaison with the city, by offering assistance in getting permits, using the space, and legal requirements. In the building across from the Cultural Center, Gallery 37 offers dance studio space, and the Storefront Theater may also be used for dance. DCA offers nonprofit rentals of meeting halls and classrooms for fundraisers and other events. DCA books and presents dance companies year round, including Winter Delights at the Cultural Center and the Summer Dance series at Grant Park, which includes dance lessons, live music and dancing. Their Spotlight on Chicago is an arts resource fair, which allows dance companies to promote themselves to arts educators and the hospitality/tourism industries.

Services for SMIDs and Eligibility Requirements

DCA provides services to both individuals and organizations, with no minimum budget or membership requirements. It serves all arts disciplines, but does not track how many in each art form are served. Organizations must be located in Chicago and have nonprofit status in order to access certain resources and to be eligible for operating grants, which are given according to budget size. Other services that are focused around professional development are geared toward individuals and do not require nonprofit status. As Smith described, one central focus of DCA's programming is hiring artists for performances as part of Summer Dance.

Though DCA's services are directed primarily at arts organizations, an initiative to support independent artists across disciplines is in development. Chicago Artists Resource (CAR) is envisioned as an "arts google" or "artist-based search engine for all the information and resources that are available." This web-based program would provide information about such pertinent topics as artist housing, individual networking opportunities, space, leases, mortgages, and building codes. At the time of this writing, DCA is currently in the process of organizing the information and the program, which will initially serve visual artists and may eventually serve other disciplines.

DCA tailors its services to individual artists through its grant programs by funding the artist for the specific kind of organizational or professional development that they wish to undertake. As Smith said, "If an artist wants to learn a new technique, or get a set of videotapes done, or whatever will help her develop her career, she can ask for money to do that. If an artist wants a grant to get her nonprofit status, she can get that."

When asked about the most valuable service that DCA provides for dance organizations with budgets less than \$50,000, Smith did not have one specific answer, but rather stated that "Dance is one of the areas that we are trying to think about a lot more." They do have a dance company in residence that receives free studio space. DCA offers this free space to other small groups, but not many have used it.

Awareness about DCA's programs is generated through the Arts Flash newsletter which advertises services and training, as well as through meetings of the more than 200 organizations that are members of Cultural Network. Additionally, DCA has an annual Spotlight event, a fair that brings together artists, educators, audiences, and the press in a two-day audience development opportunity.

Response to Focus Group Feedback¹⁸

Smith was not surprised by the mixed feedback from focus group about DCA's services and admitted that "We frankly do a better job with the larger organizations than individuals. With the exception of our grant programs, which do serve individuals, we may not be effective in communicating information to them."

Expanding Services to Dance

Smith expressed enthusiasm for the provision of more comprehensive dance services and strongly believed that this would augment DCA's ability to serve the dance field. She commented that DCA's role is "to assess what is going on in the community, look at what services are being offered, and promote those services more." In her view, the voice of dance is not adequately represented in important meetings and is thus not supported as fully as it might be. DCA wants to enhance service providers, but as Smith said, "We look at them to keep us informed about what the needs are." She continued to describe how DCA could expand services to dance saying, "I would love it... We would work with them... to create a higher profile, [or] to get more services to dancers." Smith gave examples of ways in which DCA is currently working to support dance, as well as ideas for the future, such as co-sponsoring a presentation about the new study of dance audiences in order to market it to a broader audience. (The recent study was funded by the Dance Initiative and conducted by Hubbard Street with Carol Fox & Associates and Slover Linnett Strategies.) DCA has a weekend of dance promotion scheduled in February, which would be more effective with a strong dance partner. Smith also raised the possibility of doing a tourist promotion specifically for dance in collaboration with the Chicago Office of Tourism.

Donors Forum of Chicago

Interview with Barbara Kemmis, Librarian

Note: The Donors Forum of Chicago has two categories of members: Grantmaker Members and Forum Partners, or nonprofit organizations that are seeking funds. This profile focuses on Forum Partners.

Overview of Services Provided

Donors Forum of Chicago (DFC) provides services mainly to organizations in the six county Chicago metro area through its Philanthropy Centers in the West, Northwest and South suburbs of Chicago. DFC's programs place an emphasis on the areas of fundraising and grant writing with the central resource being the Donors Forum Library, which houses the Midwest's largest collection of resources on philanthropy, nonprofit management, and fundraising and includes access to grant and foundation databases. DFC staff perform the research for members only, but

¹⁸ For focus group comments, refer to page 21.

give free orientations in order to teach non-members how to do the research themselves. Other workshops are offered and typically address such issues as proposal writing, individual giving, capital campaigns, relationships with donors, evaluation, and board development. DFC can also tailor educational programs to a group's specific needs. DFC has published several studies that are available to the public including *Giving in Illinois 2003*, *How Effective Nonprofits Work* and *Illinois Nonprofits: Profile of Charities*. The DFC website is an extensive resource with information about charitable giving, philanthropy trends, nonprofits and the economy, and public policy research. The website also contains the Grantseekers Toolbox, a step-by-step process for seeking funds that is presented in online learning modules.

Services for SMIDs and Eligibility Requirements

Nonprofit status is a requirement for membership in DFC, so most members are organizations. DFC has 1,200 nonprofit members, which is about 10% of the entire population of nonprofits in the area. Of these, 60% are located in Chicago proper and 40% in the suburbs. In terms of budget size, just over half of those served (55%) have budgets under \$1 million, about 30% are in the \$2-4 million range and 15% have budgets over \$4 million. Annual membership fees are linked to budget size and range from \$150 to \$500, with an introductory rate of \$100 for organizations whose budgets fall below \$250,000. However, some services are available to individuals. The DFC library, for instance, is open to individuals who wish to do their own research. Kemmis commented that most individuals who access services are consultants and said, "The services are structured around organizations, so we discourage individuals from joining" because they don't feel it is cost effective for them.

Approximately 13% of members are arts, cultural, or humanities organizations. This percentage may be lower than expected because many arts organizations are members of the Arts and Business Council and cannot afford membership in more than one service organization. Arts members come from all disciplines; in dance, "All the big guys are members," including Joffrey, Music and Dance Theater, Muntu, Hubbard, Dance Center of Columbia College and MCA.

Because of the nature of funding research, services are tailored to the needs of members in order to help them find the best potential funding matches for their specific project. Services are offered as "one stop shopping," or members can create sustained relationships with DFC staff. Kemmis has observed members accessing services in both ways: "Some come in once a decade. Others come literally monthly."

Kemmis believes that there is a high level of awareness about the services provided, despite minimal advertising by DFC. She explained that "The reason the library exists is because grantmaking members wanted a place to send rejected applicants to research other sources. We get a lot of word of mouth through members." DFC's website is a vehicle for the wider community to learn about services, and DFC is doing some advertising to grow their services in the suburbs. Kemmis cited some misperceptions, however, particularly among those in the dance community: "Most in the dance community think we are all about foundation grants, but I wish they would know we also support their annual fund, events, and earned income. We offer sample classes, letters, and can teach them to do research on individuals." Researchers at DFC have access to databases such as Wealth Engine, Aggregate, Guidestar, and Illinois Funding Source, as well as information about SEC filing and pension funds.

In her opinion, research assistance is the best service available to dance organizations with budgets under \$50,000 who might wish to become members. She explained that “We would help to research and find organizations who might fund [them]. It’s tough though because many funders don’t fund smaller organizations...they don’t think that organizations below \$1 million are viable.” This perception is difficult to counter, but through personalized research and advice, smaller organizations can still find support: “You cannot change [funders’] minds, but we can tell you about organizations who do think you’re wonderful. We teach members about diversifying funding sources [and] we try to promote earned income.” They can also help with annual funding from individuals.

Response to Focus Group Feedback¹⁹

Comments made about DFC in artist focus groups did not surprise Kemmis, who could relate to the feeling among artists that DFC is overwhelming: “I feel overwhelmed sometimes. I have been there six years and I’ve catalogued the entire thing...I feel like it’s the tip of the iceberg in terms of the amount of information.” The most common complaints that she hears about DFC is artists saying, “I wish you could do this for me,” or “I wish there were a list of dance funders.” In her view, DFC is providing the tools for artists to find this information themselves: “We give free orientations and teach folks how to do the research. We evaluate that orientation and [even after they attend it] folks still say they don’t feel equipped to do research. I encourage folks to sit down and do one search. After that, it is just a matter of putting in the time.” The difficulty is that “People are artists, but not fundraisers. I encourage people to join so we can do it for them...You cannot scrimp on the research.”

Expanding Services to Dance

When asked about the potential for DFC to add services for independent artists and small companies, Kemmis said, “At this time, that is not in line with our plan,” but offered that they do give classes on a contractual basis and would be happy to give presentations for groups. They have done presentations for the Illinois Arts Alliance and the League of Chicago Theaters. DFC does plan to expand services to its current members by broadening its focus “from fundraising and governance to training in all aspects of nonprofit management.” DFC is in discussion with the Arts and Business Council and CPAs for the Public Interest to collaborate on offering classes in planning and financial management.

League of Chicago Theaters

Interview with Marj Halperin, President and CEO and Ben Thiem, Member Services Manager

Overview of Services Provided

The League of Chicago Theaters (the League) provides extensive services to members in the areas of marketing, advertising, and audience development, as well as professional development, networking, and advocacy. Many of its services are geared towards garnering audiences for Chicago’s large theater community and bringing the highest possible visibility to the art form and artists. The League’s Streets to the Seats marketing initiative, launched in 2003, highlights member theaters and entices new audiences with free workshops and discounted tickets advertised via public service announcements, door hangers, and a postcard referral program.

¹⁹ For focus group comments refer to page 21.

Another benefit for members is the annual State Street Thanksgiving Day Parade; in conjunction with the Chicago Festival Association and WLS-TV ABC 7, the League produces several two-minute theatre segments in the Parade. Broadcast to more than 90 million households, the parade spots create strong on-screen identity for the shows selected. Several programs give audiences ready access to information about theater. These include the Chicagoplays theater program book and the Chicago Theater Guide, which provide member listings, show information, and articles that focus specifically on Chicago theater. The League's website, www.chicagoplays.com, provides centralized theater information, including a shows and benefits database; the city's only comprehensive opening night calendar; links to member theaters' home pages; and opportunities such as auditions and jobs. The League provides members access to a cooperative advertising program with Daily Herald, Chicago Reader, Sun Times, Tribune, WBEZ, Key Magazine, Metromix, New City and Onion. The League helps make the theater experience affordable through Play Money gift certificates, redeemable at 75 participating theaters and Hot Tix locations, and the Theater Dollars program, which offers \$5 off coupons for members' shows. For the theaters themselves, the annual CommUnity Conference is a two-day event that gives the community a chance to engage in discussion and participate in seminars about the art form, while social events like Theatre Dish and the annual holiday party offer time to network and celebrate the community's successes. The League assists members in accessing services offered by arts and governmental organizations, as well as other professional resources. Reaching beyond the theater community, the League acts as an advocate by promoting the industry with city departments and planners, and state and city tourism agencies.

Services for SMIDs and Eligibility Requirements

Though the League's services are open to dance, only a handful of the largest organizations access them. The League provides services to 170 mid-size theaters with budgets ranging up to \$500,000, (a fact which draws a sharp comparison with the dance community where "mid-size" organizations typically have budgets around or below \$200,000). Halperin saw potential for expansion to dancers and explained that despite the larger budget sizes, the League's member theaters function like small-to mid-sized dance companies from a fiscal standpoint: "They maintain the same kind of income ratios. They manage finances the same way...And they manage their boards the same way, [with] internal friends rather than external community leaders." Though not common in dance companies, theater board volunteers or company members themselves often take on additional roles in the business structure of the company, such as marketing director, managing director, or development director. Actors may be more willing to do this kind of work than dancers, presumably because longer theater runs create a situation where they are guaranteed stable income over a longer time period, and are consequently willing to take on some added responsibilities. Halperin added, however, that "The problem is that they have no training and that eventually needs to be provided." She stressed that the core issues for theater and dance are the same: "You don't find a theater company or a dance company that is started by a bunch of MBAs who say 'Let's make a dance.' They are started by artists! Somewhere along the lines they figure out that they have to market or manage money. It is secondary to the art but you need them both."

The League provides services to for-profit and non-profit incorporated organizations that have completed the production of a show, and there are no budget restrictions. It does not serve individual artists, but has educational institutions and several dance companies as members. The

theater community is very aware of the League's services and constituents access these services from within Chicago as well as "way out in the suburbs." For the most part, only members can use the League's services; for a dance company with a budget of \$200,000, membership costs about \$400 per year. The League hosts networking and cultivation meetings to boost membership because, as Halperin said, "The more members we have, the less restrictive we are with services." They allow for "itinerant members" or those who may be performing in a member's space though not members themselves, to use the League's marketing services for their production.

The League's services are tailored to the needs of its members because the programs are developed by the theaters themselves: "We have committees of members who help us...The committees develop the programming and tell us what they need." The League goes beyond its members immediate needs by speaking for the community on a national level. As a member of the Association of Performing Arts Service Organizations (APASO), the League has had success in the national media promoting "Theater Chicago Style" in an effort to boost cultural tourism and highlight the work of its members. The League is part of a group of local service organizations who meet to discuss pertinent issues and share their ideas for improving services for the community. Though the League does not participate every year, the meetings are a way to test the waters and more successfully target services to what the community needs. As staff explained, "Two years ago, the general consensus about services was less training and more direct service. Artists don't want to learn how; they just want people to do it for them. We've tried workshops, one-page fact sheets, templates, but...they want volunteers or consultants."

The League develops sustained relationships with the vast majority of its membership, which has increased from 98 to 170 theaters in the past few years, due to increased services. Halperin described the expansion saying, "What I started, the League only did cooperative advertising and Hot Tix. We had to become much more." The League added an emerging artist category, offering full membership for \$150 per year, which brought in a new group of theaters.

Expanding Services to Dance

Staff at the League expressed willingness to offer services for incorporated organizations in the dance community, and gave examples of services already in existence that could benefit dance organizations. One perk of membership in the League that could be useful to some dance companies is the opportunity to advertise performances in the Chicagoplays theater program book and the Chicago Theater Guide, which are distributed at performances as well as available to travelers in hotels across the city. This kind of cross-promotion directed at theatergoers has the potential to open up new audiences for dance. The League has negotiated a performing arts rate (which includes dance) for advertising in the Tribune and other news outlets. The League is redoing its website and intends to incorporate online ticket sales by next fall. Staff suggested that linking or combining the League's site with the site that Carol Fox at Carol Fox & Associates, Inc. is developing would result in greater visibility for both theater and dance. Dance in particular could benefit from the substantial traffic that the League's site already gets, which staff pegged at approximately 500,000 web hits per week.

In considering the possibility of adding additional services geared toward the dance community, Halperin was concerned about the issue of individual artists versus organizations, because it is

the League's mission to serve organizations that want to develop as a business. For both theater and dance organizations, this is not always a company's goal. As Halperin said, "Some of them don't want to be any more than what they are. We define them in terms of if they intend to grow or not! ...We act like they are all trying to move up that ladder. [But] the goals for theater companies are different from one another. The more aware of it they get and we get and funders get, [the better]." Staff at the League were willing to offer services to dance organizations that fit their mission, but recognized that "It may not be a dancer's goal to create a company...[but] to create their art." Staff suggested that these dance entities may need different kinds of services, such as a shared marketing director who supports a variety of groups, and noted that an organization similar to Pentacle would be better suited to provide this type of service.

Note: The League was not discussed by artists in the focus groups.

Chicago Dance Coalition

Interview with Lisa Tylke, former Executive Director

Note: Arts consultant Lisa Tylke works with a variety of theater and dance clients in Chicago and directed the Chicago Dance Coalition from 1987-1995. In this interview, Tylke provided background on the Coalition, lessons learned during its development, and advice for the creation of a dance service organization.

Background

Chicago Dance Coalition (the Coalition) was founded as an incorporated organization around 1981, in response to drastically decreased funding for dance from the Illinois Arts Council (IAC). Individuals from the dance community decided to meet with the IAC as a group. From there, the idea and the organization began to blossom through their collective work, and the MacArthur Foundation gave the Coalition funding to hire its first Executive Director. Basic services were offered such as a newsletter, dance calendar, and dance hotline. Tylke came on as Executive Director in 1987 and her first priority was to establish trust with the community. As she describes it, "My first job was to make friends, show up every day, make good on promises, and not ruffle feathers." At that time, the Coalition started sharing office space with the League of Chicago Theaters and used its programs as a model because, "The League was doing so many exciting things." After transitioning into the role of Executive Director, Tylke identified the next priority for the Coalition as being "a voice for the community to the public and the powers that be, to make sure we were at the table and heard." As the head of a new organization, Tylke felt like dance was not taken seriously, but understood that that is how Chicago works: "People work with people they know, who are at the table. For a long time we were not invited to tables with funders or the city." Another priority was to build a board whose members were representative of the community in order to give Tylke a sense of the field's opinions and the ability to express them with a collective voice.

The Coalition served both individuals and organizations with nonprofit status in the Chicago metro area, and membership dues were structured in tiered levels according to budget size. There were approximately 300 members, of whom 200 were individuals and 100 were organizations, including presenters and universities. The Coalition served mostly contemporary companies and artists, but was fairly representative of the community. The Coalition's services were mostly focused on performers and in-school educators, rather than the studio population.

As Tylke recalled, the Coalition had its strengths: “We had a good sense of prioritizing and getting rid of services that were not being used. The evolution of services mirrors the growth of the organization and its decline too.” This decline was delayed for a short while because of the success of one program, Dancelink, which arranged for the selection, marketing, and cross-touring of two artists from each of four cities including Chicago, Philadelphia, Miami, and Minneapolis. The program infused an energy into the Coalition, which as Tylke explained, “Dancelink kept us in our jobs for a year or two...[and created the feeling that] there’s a reason for us to exist, we’re growing.” Tylke loved the level of collaboration and the community excitement that it generated, describing it as an “aligning of the planets...we were working with national colleagues. It was stimulating and the women who started it wanted to work together.”

The Coalition ultimately folded for a number of financial and organizational reasons. Tylke describes the situation that the Coalition faced: “It was totally under-resourced...I could fill in some of the gaps, but only to a certain point...70% of the money was contributed. When you have 70% contributed income, but you don’t have a director of development, no board funding levels, and it’s not a moneyed board, that’s a losing combination by any textbook. There was only so much money to do programs that the field wanted and to pay staff to stay around.” Part of the problem was that the Coalition didn’t have for-profit members who were paying dues. As Tylke summarized her thoughts at the time, “Here we are under-resourced, serving the poor arts field! How is that going to work?” Tylke recalls that Dance/USA was struggling at the time as well, although it had more cache with funders than did local service organizations, which caused some strife. Even when funding could be secured, it wasn’t stabilizing for the Coalition because funders would commit for a few years, take a year off, and then recommit to funding for a few years of a new project. This climate became too much for the Coalition: “It became too hard to hold it together, to rally people around things. This community was like a big clunky sailboat when the wind changes.” She realized then that “The timeline for this community and developing needed to be a little longer...It takes a long time for a service entity to develop. Ironically, a new service organization would start with the same services that no one wanted to fund.”

Tylke eventually decided to move on, only to watch the organization that she’d grown begin to struggle with staffing: “They needed someone to come in with [considerable] experience on an entry-level salary. I had set them up to have a leader...[but] they could only afford a student level [position].” The transition of leadership was an important step in ensuring the Coalition’s future health, and it was a struggle. Tylke worked with a consultant to create a strategy so that she could leave the Coalition with “money in the bank and a plan on the table,” but the organization could not be sustained after she left.

Tylke’s plan was to reshape the way that the dance community thought about the services they received from the Coalition and she thinks this has implications for service provision today: “The piece of my plan when I left was to shift the relationship of the members from one of reciprocity – ‘I give you \$35 and I get \$35 of services’ – to ‘I give you \$35 for the betterment of the community, which makes it better for me.’ With for-profit associations...They know they have to join to be part of the industry, to see it grow, that’s their voice. They see it as a greater collective.” However, there were significant challenges: “With communities that are so in need,

so poor, any resource has got to be a fee for service. It's draining...you put your efforts into what they think are personally helpful." The discussion of the problems of service providers inevitably led to discussion of Moming. As Tylke said, "Moming folded because it was serving a constituency that could not pay for its services. It tried to turn around and say 'entitlement is over, the 80s are over, you have to pay,' but the dance community turned its back. Peter [Tumbelston] was there and was trying to shift the philosophy to having them pay higher fees."

The Presenting Question

As with many service organizations in that era, the question was raised as to whether the Coalition should begin to present. As Tylke describes, "I had to say no...If your mission is to serve, then your mission puts you into conflict with presenting. It changes your relationship with your members right away. A presenter needs to have a vision; otherwise you are just a rental." She believes that the Chicago dance community needs a mid-sized presenter like the Joyce Theater in New York, which is willing to take risks and build an audience. Despite how much she loved the Dancelink program, Tylke admitted that this presenting opportunity immediately changed the relationship with the Coalition's members: "Artists still came to meetings...[but now] they wanted to be picked for Dancelink!"

Services to be Offered

When asked to offer her guidance for the creation of a new service organization, based on her years of experience in Chicago, Tylke stressed the importance of professional development and creating a real industry. At the outset, she recommended "Making a choice in the beginning about which [groups] you are going to serve and what the expectations are for that. I would not start back at the reciprocity or service membership model, but think about creating an organization with a charter to say that you are here to move the industry forward." A service organization with strong vision would be in Tylke's words, "Playing the role that isn't being played." For Tylke, the importance of being at the table, speaking for the community, convening it when necessary, and telling the field where it needs to go are ultimately the most vital functions of a service organization, even if they are not what the community is asking for. She explained: "If you ask an independent artist, they would not say they need those things. They would not know to name those things...If you want to offer space then be a space, but that's not a service organization. I don't think you can do both well given the resources that are out there."

When asked what services should be offered for independent dance artists and small companies, Tylke suggested fiscal agency but hesitated, saying it would only be useful if there was a funding community that supported it. In her view, the benefit of more accessible fiscal agency is that it would keep independent artists and small companies from "developing a superficial or false structure" in order to go after funding. She questioned though whether the creation of work by independent artists is something that funders want to support.

Recommendations

When told that dance artists in Chicago do not utilize many of the services available as shown on the Comparative Document, Tylke was not surprised. As a consultant to the Arts and Business Council, Tylke knew how organizations in other arts fields operate and provided insight into how staff limitations influence the choices that dance artists can make: "The majority of folks who come to ABC are theater companies, but they have staff and buildings [and can thus access

existing services]. There is a whole different mentality to supporting the infrastructure of theater, than dance.” Expectations for funding influence dance artists’ decisions: “Getting a managing director for a dance company is impossible; funders won’t pay for it. They will pay for a new work to be commissioned.” Finally, wearing too many hats can cause burnout: “The dance community is really terrific at making the most of their resources. They share things, but sometimes they get tired. It is too much to ask for Artistic Directors to become expert marketing and development people. When you have administrative people who are focused on being good administrators, it works.”

Advocacy

Tylke explained how one of the greatest services that the Coalition provided was simply allowing the community to get to know each other. She said, “Part of the thing that a service organization can do is give artists a convening place, a sense of community, a way to connect [young artists] to artists at the next level...That kind of convener or voice is so important. No matter how boring it sounds you knew you belonged to something. You were not alone.” The Coalition tailored some services to the participants, such as Project Articulate, a marketing and grant writing project where staff worked with artists to write press releases and draft copy. From the simplest services, such as newsletters, to the more elaborate, such as weekend community retreats, for Tylke the result was a feeling of solidarity for dance in Chicago. Now, however, she sees isolated centers of activity: “Now Links Hall, and all those places are the pockets. The Coalition went beyond the pockets.”

Membership and Funding

Thinking of the future executive director of a new service organization, Tylke advised, “Don’t take the job unless they have a five-year contract with the salary guaranteed with a foundation. Funders need to understand this. They need to give an organization a long-term commitment.” When she was running the Coalition, the stresses of keeping it afloat were a daily threat: “I could not create the financial base to breathe. I literally could not breathe anymore. We needed to grow and there was no money growing.” She suggested looking at the model of the League of Chicago Theaters and analyzing why it works, compared to service organizations like the Coalition where earned revenue is meager. The League is successful because “It has a for profit membership base that pays more than its nonprofit members, equity and non-equity. They have a big base of large theaters. The dues structure probably pays more than 30% of the budget. They sell advertising, as their members produce constantly. They have a ticket program, they promote theater.” In essence, the League’s success is built on the fact that the core of their programs are taken care of through membership dues. As Tylke summarized, “They are sustainable. Their economics work, so they can do bigger and better programming. And, it gives them the independence to think for themselves. I never figured out how to crack that nut. The economics of dance.”

Sacred Dance Guild, *Interview with Michelle White, President of the Lakeshore Chapter of the Sacred Dance Guild*

Background

The Sacred Dance Guild is a membership organization for liturgical or sacred dance, an art form that draws large numbers of participants and operates quite differently from other parts of the

dance community in Chicago. The local chapter of the Sacred Dance Guild, called the Lakeshore Chapter, operates in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana, and there are no eligibility requirements. The Guild offers services to its members including sharing events, in which groups show their dances and then offer each other constructive feedback in a supportive environment. The Guild hosts a day of choreography workshops, with time for sharing dances and a liturgical dance video viewing event.

Sacred Dance

The liturgical dance community is mostly made up of church-affiliated groups that do not have nonprofit status. The groups typically find dancers, rehearse, and perform all within their church community, though many also have large concerts that draw big audiences from other churches and ministries. Liturgical dance takes several forms including private movement prayer and group participatory movement prayer, or can be incorporated within the actual church service. It can be improvised or choreographed, and with large groups one dancer often leads the participants in movement. Most liturgical dance in the United States is Christian in nature, though there are differences in the dance that is done in evangelical groups versus those that are more mainline denominational. Despite some differences, there is a similarity in the structure of liturgical dance across various congregations. Many dances consist of solos that are repeated or movements that interpret the liturgy. White described liturgical dance as “the toughest kind of dance to do well” because of the need for both dance skills and an understanding of liturgy. She explained that it is not only site specific, because of the need to adapt to the physical space of various churches and sanctuaries, but also context specific, “based on the liturgy that day and how movement can be used to enhance and support and deepen the message.”

One area where liturgical dance shares common ground with other dance forms is the lack of financial support in terms of the compensation of dancers and funding. Though White is sometimes paid for her work she said, “It is a battle to be paid. Musicians always get paid. It is mostly women who don’t demand or expect or require [payment].” Costumes are an important element of most liturgical dance, though White could not pinpoint how artists typically cover the expense. For the Sacred Dance Guild, a recent grant from the Chicago Community Trust was the first they had ever received. As White explains, it was a crucial step for liturgical dance: “This was the first that anyone nationally had ever gotten funding. The funding was to hire a staff person to work on the study of the sacred dance in the Chicago area,” which she felt was much needed: the Mapping Project grossly under-represented this group, in her opinion.

Audiences

There are several interesting contrasts between liturgical dance and other dance forms in the Chicago area. For one, liturgical dancers generally do not use the word “performance” to describe what they do, but rather consider it to be more a part of their religious work. As White said, “It would not be called ‘presentation’ or ‘concert.’ The majority would say, ‘I don’t perform, I minister.’ In every church we are fighting the perception that we are self-glorifying.” While the cost of advertising performances is an issue for many dance groups, the situation for liturgical dancers is different, as White explained: “There is no marketing. I can go to a church and be in front of 500 people. They will be at church whether I am dancing or not.” However, there is an inherent marketing challenge in reaching out to all the various groups that make up the liturgical dance field, which she hopes the Chicago Community Trust study will begin to do:

“We don’t even have a complete list of everyone, which is why we want to do the study, to determine who is around...It is a real marketing challenge, to reach people and build up the community.” As she said, “The majority of congregations in America are focused on the arts...We are defining dance as basically 20-year-old white girls at different venues starting up dance organizations around town. If you want to get into the African American community and have a more integrated concept, you have to go into the churches.”

Some churches and organizations have recently put on large scale liturgical dance events, including one based at the arts-only YMCA and the other at the UIC pavilion, which included over 100 dancers from different ministries around the area. White felt that events such as these have great crossover potential, as they involve large audiences that may not otherwise be exposed to dance.

Need for Services

When asked what services the liturgical dance community needs, White commented that “What it needs and what it will accept are two different things.” She explained that because many work on a volunteer basis, the time available to access even much-needed services is very limited: “They are working full-time jobs plus doing their ministry, which is an incredible amount of time. So to even go to a workshop beyond that...a lot won’t attend.” White named a few other liturgical dance organizations including the Christian Dance Fellowship and National Liturgical Dance Ministry Network, though the quality of their workshops can vary. In White’s view, allocating funding to the Sacred Dance Guild in order to hire her full-time would greatly help the development of the liturgical dance community in the Chicago area.

Additionally, White cited a primary need for basic dance and choreography training for members of the liturgical dance community. In terms of choreography, “People need to know how to choreograph untrained dancers, which is something you can do but is an art in itself...If it’s really going to minister to people, that’s a form of communication and people need to learn how to do very simple choreography that untrained people can do, but that can be moving to the congregation.” This greater understanding of choreography is essential to the art form because without it, “It ends up [appearing as] a dance stuck in the middle [of the service], rather than being about the sermon, or a concept from the scripture. It could be so much more powerful.” Studying the site-specific issues that go along with choreographing sacred dance in sacred spaces would benefit the art form as well: “Most churches have not been designed for dance at all. So you are dealing with massive sight line challenges.”

Because the dancers typically come from within the churches themselves, the level of training varies more than in other areas of dance. As White explained, “Some audition, some don’t. Different churches handle it differently. The majority of the dancers are not trained.” There are few formalized places to study liturgical dance, and many dancers are hesitant to get basic dance training because, “Some don’t want to go to a school ‘in the world’. They want to go to a Christian-based dance school.”

Specific Services of Interest to SMIDS

Fiscal Sponsorship. When asked about the possibility of offering fiscal sponsorship, many recognized the community's desire for such a service. But most of the service organizations profiled did not express a willingness or ability to provide this complicated service due to issues of staff capacity, conflicts of interest, legal liability, and funding. Janet Carl Smith at DCA was concerned about the city's bureaucracy and the difficulty that working within such a large structure. CJ Mitchell at Links Hall explained, "We are all in favor of artists being sponsored, but don't have the resources right now. My hesitation is less to do with need, but more with the fact that we are so limited staff-wise." He mentioned the considerably increased burden of auditing and accounting that goes along with providing the service. The primary concern on the part of Barbara Kemmis at Donors Forum of Chicago was opening the door to increased conflicts of interest. As she said, "We are a membership organization, as opposed to a community foundation. There are so many [nonprofits] already, and there is concern about encouraging more." Staff from the Arts and Business Council cited legal issues as the primary obstacle: "Regarding fiscal sponsorship, the board would need to be convinced that the organizations we deal with would fulfill their legal responsibilities. A joint collective fiscal responsibility would take a lot of thinking." Similarly, William Rattner of Lawyers for the Creative Arts cautioned that "Fiscal sponsorship is a legal relationship. The IRS takes it very seriously." Staff at the League of Chicago Theaters said the issue of fiscal sponsorship hasn't come up, presumably because they work with larger organizations that are typically incorporated. And Lisa Tylke, former Executive Director of the Chicago Dance Coalition, recalled that the Coalition did not offer fiscal sponsorship mainly because the foundations were not interested in funding independent artists through such a service.

Group Health Insurance. None of the service organizations profiled provide health insurance to their members, (with the exception of the former Chicago Dance Coalition which had approximately 50 members enrolled). Many of those interviewed, however, did respond positively to the idea of health insurance provision. The general response was that health insurance for members would be ideal, but the first concern would be to offer it to the staff of service organizations. As CJ Mitchell at Links Hall said, "I would love it for employees! That would be the first step." This topic seemed to raise questions for librarian Barbara Kemmis at Donors Forum Chicago, where staff already has health insurance. She said, "I wish we could [offer health insurance to members] but we don't. I'm not sure why." The League of Chicago Theaters continues to look into this possibility but as Halperin commented, "Illinois insurance law limits the ability to [provide health insurance]. Legislation requires a fairly direct employer/employee relationship...There is a plan actually about another way to look at it...We may be starting a plan where members' staff can get [insurance]." One organization, Department of Cultural Affairs, does not offer health insurance to members but offers liability insurance to grantees for any performances.

5. Dance Services in Other Cities

Introduction

A number of efforts are underway in cities across the country to examine the need for dance services. It was thought that Chicago might benefit from knowing about the work that had taken place in these cities, and draw from the ideas that had been developed in other locations. Research was gathered about these efforts in Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC.

A review of this information would determine if there were any contrasts or similarities in:

- Planning. Why had these cities decided to form organizations at this time? What happened that led up to this decision?
- Areas of service provision. Most importantly, what services were going to be offered in each city? Was there a focus on independent artists and small companies?
- Structure. Were these cities looking at starting a new organization or were they going to work under the auspices of an existing one?
- Timing. When were these organizations due to start up and what were their projections for what could be accomplished within the next few years?
- Funding. Who is supporting their efforts? Was funding in place for start-up costs? Had any obtained multi-year support?
- Coordination of efforts. Had these cities communicated with each other? Would it be possible to collaborate by sharing information or possibly working together as a group?

The information that follows summarizes these cities' efforts and points to some similarities in the areas of services to be provided as well as the timing.

Philadelphia

The following is taken from written information provided by the Dance Services Steering Committee (DSSC) in Philadelphia, in addition to an interview with Amy Smith of Headlong Dance Theater.

Background

In May of 2003, following the close of the Philadelphia Dance Alliance, the Nonprofit Facilities Fund report found the dance community's greatest short-term needs to be: comprehensive audience development activities; a strong service and leadership infrastructure; and non-artistic capacity building. The dance community responded by holding six well-attended meetings, which included 60-70 participants. This group made a decision to focus primarily on dance service needs.

The Dance Services Steering Committee was organized in September of 2003 and has since held 16 meetings and received a planning grant from William Penn Foundation. The group surveyed the needs of dance artists and presented four "Best Practices" forums for the dance community. These forums and a subsequent retreat highlighted the following needs:

- resources to build capacity (artistic and administrative) and accurate, accessible, exchangeable, and inclusive information, to be provided by a physical and virtual information hub, including space for dancers to network and a computer to search the Internet for resources;
- leadership and advocacy for dance in Philadelphia, which would provide a "seat at the table" to advocate for needs specific to the dance community;
- dance-specific audience development;
- the arrangement of affordable space for rehearsal and low-tech performance;
- capacity building activities, such as artistic workshops, collaborations, and administrative and technical "how to" sessions.

DSSC decided that a new dance leadership organization is needed to represent and serve the dance field. This new nonprofit organization will be governed by dancers, for dancers and dance organizations. It will facilitate and coordinate, rather than provide a range of direct services. It is considering using Philadelphia Dance Alliance's existing 501(c)3 structure.

Major Services

Mission: to advocate for dance as an art form and a vital component of our culture. The organization will aim to increase the capabilities of dance artists and organizations, and to enhance the public's awareness of and support for dance in all its diversity. The organization will also create links regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Vision: to work to raise the profile of dance as a vital force within the larger cultural landscape. By building on Philadelphia's growing reputation within the field, it will generate more interest, participation, and support for dance both locally and nationally. It will enable dance artists and organizations to pursue their artistic work, while providing an adequate quality of life. It will respond inclusively to the needs of the area's diverse dance community.

The organization exists to develop and provide:

- an information hub, both virtual and physical, which is accessible by members and provides the general public with a comprehensive listing of resources and events;
- visionary leadership and advocacy for the cause of professional dance;
- a space and forum where dance artists can interact, share resources, and develop collaborative activities;
- shared capacity-building activities, to meet administrative, technical, and professional development needs; and
- collaborative audience development activities.

As its initial purposes are fulfilled, the organization will begin exploring the widely acknowledged need for affordable rehearsal and performance space, leading either to 1) arrangements for wider use of one or more existing “nodes” of dance activity, or 2) procuring (probably by lease) existing space capable of housing the information hub, meetings, and at least one rehearsal studio that can also be used for small-audience, low-tech performances.

Values:

- **Diversity.** We will embrace diversity in the dance community, which is a great strength in Philadelphia and promotes our ability to bridge gaps between audiences, artists, and organizations.
- **Collaboration.** We will work to enhance the existing degree of connectedness and collaborative spirit among dance artists and organizations at all levels, including individual artists, dance companies, and organizations.
- **Leadership/Advocacy.** An organization that can speak specifically to the unique nature of our art form will allow us to advance the cultural health of the greater community by strengthening individual organizations, furthering the careers of individual artists, and raising the profile for dance.
- **Inclusiveness/Responsiveness/Flexibility.** We seek to build an organization that is both reflective of and responsive to the entire dance constituency through a governance structure with opportunities for all to participate in decision making.
- **Accessibility.** We seek to improve opportunities for artists and organizations to gain access to resources as well as opportunities for audiences to participate more fully in dance events.

Governance

A board of 11-15 members will govern the organization, with a minimum of 4-6 selected from the dance community. These members will include representatives of independent artists, dance companies, “nodes” of dance activity, and organizations now serving the community. The board will meet four to six times per year and the Executive Committee will make interim decisions. Committees and task forces will be responsible for programs and projects. Non-board dancers will serve on all committees. A full-time visionary dance leader will head the organization as Executive Director.

Organizations will initially become members by attending the annual plenary meeting or by serving on committees. There will be no dues during the pilot period. At the annual plenary meeting, members will elect the board and the entire community will review priority activities and make recommendations to the board.

Timeline

The three-year pilot will demonstrate the need for a dance leadership organization and its potential for long-term success. A sound long-term financial plan will be developed during this time. The board will also implement the proposed three-year organizational plan.

During the first year (2005) space will be rented and arts management interns will be recruited to staff an information hub, which will be created and networked with information resources. Board committees will be named for Year 1 and 2 activities. The group will begin to form advocacy relationships.

In year two (2006), periodic roundtables will be organized for different categories of members. The resources available through the information hub/website will be increased. Advocacy activities will begin and board committees will be named to plan Year 3 functions.

Year three (2007) will include the launching of capacity building and audience development activities. Audience development will include collaborative marketing and pro-active scheduling to avoid conflicts. In the first six months of this year, a case statement and financial plan for the organization's future will be developed and submitted to funders. Studio space needs will be reconsidered and if indicated, planning will begin to acquire a collaborative rehearsal/low-tech performance space.

Steering Committee Members

Manfred Fischbeck, Group Motion
Terry Fox, Philadelphia Dance Projects (co-chair)
Ariel Weiss Holyst, Gender Project/Independent Artist
Terri Shockley, CEC (co-chair)
Amy Smith, Headlong Dance Theater
Melanie Stewart, Melanie Stewart Dance
Nick Stuccio, Live Arts Festival/Philly Fringe
Malin VanAntwerp, Volunteer Attorney

Washington, DC

The following information was developed from written materials from Dance/USA and a conversation with Executive Director Andrea Snyder, in addition to other sources.

Background

Unlike some of the other cities with sizeable dance communities, Washington DC has never had a service organization with paid staff. In the distant past, there were efforts to provide limited services to the dance field on a volunteer basis. The Modern Dance Association (later known as the Metropolitan Dance Association) operated in the 1980s, and had a newsletter and a loan fund. And, the *Washington Dance View* was a journal about performances in the local area. In recent years, Metro DC Dance Awards had rallied considerable support from the dance community around an annual event, at which awards were given by and for the community and performances took place.

In 2003, Dance/USA published a mapping and needs assessment for the dance community in the DC metropolitan area, including Virginia and Maryland. This study reported a fragmentation due to lack of communication and absence of a mechanism for collaborative efforts. Dance/USA responded by convening a series of meetings with the dance community, which has become known as the DC Dance Action Group. Members of this group comprise a cross-section of the target population to be served by Dance/MetroDC [the title for the new service entity, or D/MDC] which includes choreographers, dancers, presenters, artistic directors, administrators, production designers, dance educators and studio directors. The group works within six geographic areas: District of Columbia, Arlington, Fairfax, and Alexandria counties in Virginia, and Montgomery and Prince George's counties in Maryland. Since March of 2004, a series of meetings of the DC Dance Action Group have been attended by a core group of about 65 people with an average of approximately 30 people at each convening. Voices from within these meetings, while diverse, were quick to develop consensus about the need for leadership to centralize information and raise the visibility of dance within the metropolitan Washington area.

The Dance Action Group has taken steps toward identifying its priorities and outlining the needs that could best be addressed by a service provider, including deciding what could be accomplished with existing and volunteer resources and what should be addressed by the service provider. An informal survey was sent to DC Dance Action Group participants asking to rate the importance of each item and indicate their willingness to volunteer time and talents toward achieving that objective (31 responded). Two priorities emerged: 1) creating a web presence to facilitate information and communication about dance in the Washington Metro area, and 2) developing collaborative marketing strategies.

Services

Building on the momentum from the DC Dance Action Group meetings, Dance/USA hired a Project Director in early 2005 to lead Dance/MDC and assume leadership of the Dance Action Group. In its first year, the Project Director will 1) cultivate a web presence for the metropolitan DC dance community, including a performance calendar, community directory, databases of rehearsal and performance spaces, auditions and volunteers, and community message boards, 2) create a system of roundtables through which artists and administrators can meet regularly with peers to share ideas and resources (including small group discussions and future Dance Action

Group town meetings), and 3) develop strategies for collaborative marketing among local dance artists and companies. Dance/MDC will also assume the production of the Metro DC Dance Awards, an annual event to celebrate excellence in local dance.

Funding

In November of 2004, the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation awarded Dance/USA funding to support the first nine months of a staff position for Dance/MDC. Funding is also pending from the Cafritz Foundation. (Multi-year support will be sought from the Meyer Foundation for general operation, technical assistance, and other special needs.) Dance/USA will look to other local funders to support additional start up expenses and first-year programming expenses. Going forward, Dance/MetroDC will look at developing earned income streams to sustain its programs while bearing in mind the scarcity of resources available to the local dance community. Further staff assistance will be necessary to provide the expected level of service and achieve the longer-term goals. In the first year, Dance/Metro DC will implement an internship program in consultation with the Dance and Arts Administration programs at local universities. Until Dance/Metro DC is able to add an additional part-time staff assistant position, Dance/USA intends to outsource special project activity.

Governance and Relationship to Dance/USA

Dance/Metro DC will benefit from the systems established by Dance/NYC and Dance/USA, particularly in the areas of website development, peer networking, and advocacy. Dance/MDC would be modeled on the successes of Dance/NYC and develop further this brand of service provision. The Dance/MDC Director will join the Dance/NYC Director as fulltime staff of Dance/USA. As such, both report to the Executive Director of Dance/USA and join the staff at Dance/USA board meetings. In addition, periodic reports and updates about Dance/MDC will appear in Dance/USA communications and publications. In a cultural landscape where support for individual artists and capacity-building for organizations are major topics of concern, Dance/USA believes the lessons learned in establishing a centralized service provider of this type can be useful on a very wide scale. Because of the importance of data gathering to its core operations, Dance/USA is equipped with the infrastructure to incorporate in-depth quantitative and qualitative evaluation mechanisms into the programs of Dance/Metro DC.

Several existing dance organizations in the DC area, including Dance Place, Joy of Motion, and American Dance Institute, have already indicated their interest in, and support of, a service function like Dance/MDC. These organizations and others will form the basis of an advisory group to continually assess the priorities of the community. Similar to the advisory body for Dance/NYC, this group will provide guidance about the vision for and implementation of Dance/MDC, but will not have any fiduciary responsibilities. Dance/Metro DC will use the talents and resources within the dance community by mobilizing individual members and small committees around actions that they commit to implementing. The Project Director of Dance/MDC will represent the dance community at convenings of other arts organizations and act as an advocate for DC area dance on the local, regional, and national levels. The intention is for the services of Dance/Metro DC to complement, not duplicate, the programs of existing service providers.

Minneapolis

The following is based on an interview with Neil Cuthbert of the McKnight Foundation.

Background

The once thriving service organization for dance in Minneapolis, called the Minnesota Dance Alliance (which was later renamed Dance Today), closed its doors in 2003, despite attempts to restructure it and create a new organization. As Cuthbert said, “We tried to reinvent Dance Today from the traditional responsive service organization to be something more proactive and 21st century. [But] it had too much history, and the financial hole they found themselves in was too much to overcome. We had to see what could spring up in its place.” With these challenges, some felt that the service organization was becoming an obstacle to the progress of dance in Minneapolis.

The McKnight Foundation hosted and documented an all-day Open Space meeting to give the dance community a forum in which to share their thoughts on the future of service provision in Minneapolis, and 150 people representing a range of diverse dance forms were in attendance. The response from the community was immediate and energetic. Conversations and ideas about what should follow began to develop and interestingly, the community has not pressed to create another service organization. Cuthbert described this response as “Huge...phenomenal for the community and us,” and particularly mentioned the value of creating visibility for dance in Minneapolis as a whole.

Current Services and Activities

Out of this meeting came a variety of efforts on the part of existing institutions that have stepped up their role in providing services to dance. The Southern Theater has continued its role as the primary dance producer, and now serves as the administrative home for McKnight’s fellowships, though the organization is cautious about becoming known as a dance service organization. The Walker Art Center’s new performance lab will be dedicated to local choreographers. The University of Minnesota’s dance program is also a big resource for the community; several groups of choreographers, including one made up of middle-aged artists, have regular meetings to discuss their needs and the state of the field.

Some of these programs are funded on a project basis. In an effort to uncover other financial resources, consultant Catherine Baumgartner is gathering research for McKnight that is “less about response and more about advocacy, education, and audience development.” Cuthbert spoke about a related plan to tap into the suburban dance community: “One of the big things I am intent on pursuing is creating some sort of relationship between the studio community in the suburbs and the concert community in the city. The studios have thousands of students who love to dance. There is an economy out there that does not exist in the city.” To facilitate this crossover, Cuthbert is reaching out to business people in the suburbs to identify ways to draw new audiences into Minneapolis venues and reinvigorate support for dance.

Advice for Chicago

From his 14 years of experience working with service organizations in Minneapolis, Cuthbert shared his advice for creating a new service organization. He explained that in order for a new organization to be successful, it cannot follow the traditional service model but must keep itself

relevant: “The big thing with service organizations that I feel is key is having them figure out how to be entrepreneurial. They were founded on a welfare service mentality. And the ones in other disciplines that are successful have found ways to be about developing strategies to link artists with audiences through classes, education, and public programs.” He pointed out that Minneapolis is home to several of the best artist service organizations in the country. He gave the American Composers Forum as an example; with chapters all over the country, it runs residency programs for composers in colleges, churches and synagogues, continually widening the audience for new music. As Cuthbert explained, “We have models here for how to reinvent service organizations, but they have never been applied to dance.”

In Cuthbert’s view, the most essential services to provide for independent artists and small companies are straightforward: “What they need is a venue, a place to rehearse, and someone to get them in front of an audience. It’s fairly simple. How you provide them is what is new.” Service organizations in other disciplines have evolved further than most in dance by figuring out new strategies and getting rid of old models. In particular, many have become more aggressive in valuing the role of the audience though, as Cuthbert explained, this transition can be difficult for artists: “This is something that was really hard for the service organizations to do, as artists felt abandoned if the focus was on audiences. We said, ‘If we don’t focus on the reader [or] the listener then you cannot be an artist. They are linked. Just that little shift meant so much for so many programs.’” The needs and interests of the audience have been studied more closely but for artists, “The sense of betrayal was phenomenal.” In the end though, as Cuthbert explained, “It’s really about, ‘do you want an audience or not?’”

When told about the findings regarding the significant lack of administrative support for dance Chicago, Cuthbert confirmed that it is also a major problem in Minneapolis, particularly for dance as compared to other disciplines. However, from his own meetings with mid-career choreographers, Cuthbert observed widely different administrative needs on the part of each artist because of the idiosyncratic ways in which their companies had developed. When artists were asked about what shared resource the McKnight Foundation could potentially fund to support them, he found that “There was no consensus of what a shared person or resource could do for them. There were not even complementary needs like marketing or fundraising. They had cobbled together their skills and weren’t interested in changing. They wanted more money but completely on their own terms.” Ideas such as funding shared administrative staff or a pool of dancers were not appealing to artists who had set up their organizations and trained their dancers in specific ways. As Cuthbert said, “Basically what they all needed was someone really good, smart and dedicated who would work for nothing.”

As for the idea of starting another service organization, the future is unknown. Cuthbert surmises that, unlike other cities, it has been a relatively short time since Dance Today folded, and the community may need more time before they rally behind a unified effort.

6. Other Models of Service Provision

Introduction

Over the past two years, at the Advisory's meetings and in conducting research for this study, many dance practitioners regularly referred to organizations in New York that offer highly effective services to the dance field there. An examination of what is offered, and how it is delivered could provide ideas for the Chicago community as it develops its own service model. Per the steering committee's recommendation, initial research was conducted on Dance/NYC, The Field, Dance Theater Workshop, and Pentacle.²⁰

During the month of March, three of these organizations were invited to Chicago to meet with the project directors and Advisory, to have a dialogue about:

- The services they offer;
- If, and how, they have addressed the service needs that Chicago has;
- How their services were developed and how they meet the needs of independent artists and small companies in their cities;
- If and how technology has changed the ways in which they offer services;
- The role they play in advocacy;
- And how their services complement the work of other organizations in their city;
- The budgets for service provision;
- How their organizations are funded.

A summary of those meetings follows, and documents the wide range of services that are provided. These organizations are to be acknowledged for their generosity in offering their time by traveling to Chicago and giving outstanding presentations that were extremely useful to the Advisory; and, for the information they provided, including details about budgets.

²⁰ Pentacle had already met with the Advisory. Therefore, they did not visit Chicago in March, but information about their services was submitted in writing.

Dance Theater Workshop

The following is based on website and written materials, as well as a presentation to the Advisory by Cathy Edwards, Artistic Director and Cary Baker, Director of Artist Services, with additional input from David White, former Executive Director and Producer.

Background

Dance Theater Workshop (DTW) was founded in 1965 as a multi-faceted organization “devoted to developing programs and resources that help independent artists grow professionally while increasing the public’s involvement in the arts.” With a long history of providing a home and support base for artists, the organization meets a range of needs in the New York dance community by offering comprehensive artist services, eight distinct production series in its new performing arts center, and audience and community education programs. Now entering its fourth decade, DTW’s mission and reach has expanded considerably even after supporting three generations of visionary artists.

A Balance of Service and Presentation

According to Cathy Edwards, DTW’s “underpinnings are the resolute insistence that everything we do is a service to the dance field...including NPN, the Suitcase Fund, and other projects, which were viewed as a different kind of service to the field. A service rhetoric and mentality is pervasive.” DTW began as a choreographers’ member-based collective devoted to the sponsorship and practical support of the work of colleagues, including artists who are early in their careers. Service was the first core program of the organization, as members self presented work and pooled resources, including mailing lists and labor. Services were always designed to be practical, client based, inclusive of the entire community and related to production and presentation. As a new generation of artists emerged and needed access to the same types of resources and services, DTW grew and was established as a formal program that remained governed by membership. When David White joined the organization in 1975, the bylaws were changed to eliminate member governance, which White considered a burdensome way to do business that removed the value of subjective and qualitative decision making and limited the organization’s ability to survive and make an impact. Artist involvement in governance has remained important on the DTW board, where artists comprise one quarter of board members and make critical contributions to the organization. White also instituted a division of services, including full presentation, subsidized presentation and access to presentation support, regardless of the venue. Because of the great demand for DTW’s presentation services, the organization has had to come to terms with the fact that New York “is a city where hundreds of artists are making work and we only have the same 52 weeks, so by definition we will only ever be working with a handful to present them.” DTW has therefore tried to balance presentation with services that reinforce the entire community and create an overall healthy dance ecology. For example, Edwards highlighted efforts aimed at the sharing of resources: “We sell our press list to any artist who wants to present their own work. We don’t hold back on information or tools, but make them available to the entire dance community. They can tweak and rebuild those tools to suit their product.”

DTW’s Services

Dance Theatre Workshop offers comprehensive member services in publicity, new work development, and access to health insurance. Both members and nonmembers can access

services such as affordable rehearsal space, seminars and classes on a range of topics, and a state-of-the-art digital media lab. Membership size ranges from 700-1,000 artists and is set up in three tiers: associate artist level, full artist level, and organizations. For \$45/year, associate members are eligible for *Fresh Tracks* (a showcase opportunity), presenting, discounts on studio and theater rental, health insurance, press and audience mailing lists and discounts on classes and seminars. For \$85/year, full members also receive discounts on ads, a press reference kit and a membership kit (see below). Organizational membership is offered on a sliding scale based on the organization's annual budget. Because of the spectrum of services offered, DTW members include a wide range of constituents, including new self producing artists as well as those that are more established.²¹

Artist Services Membership Kit. The Artist Services Membership Kit provides members with a detailed overview of services provided by DTW. It includes valuable information such as step by step instructions for services, rates for ads in various publications, model publicity calendars and details about financial, production and ticketing services. In addition to the full scope of services detailed below, DTW staff also provides full members with free general assistance and consultation by appointment on artistic and administrative questions that fall within their areas of expertise including marketing, graphic design, fundraising and technical production.

Publicity Services and Press Reference Kit. Members have access to a range of services and resources that are essential to artists in creating, producing and advertising their work. DTW provides Full Artist members with a Press Reference Kit, which offers advice for successful media pitching, a sample press release and updated lists of press contacts, critics, presenters, sponsors and funding agencies. Because the press contact addresses change rapidly, DTW offers and recommends the purchase of a press list for each mailing, which costs \$50. Audience Mailing Lists are also available and include up to 16,000 individuals and organizations that are segmented by artistic discipline (dance, music, theater, visual art and inter-disciplinary arts), and available as a national list or targeted to the five boroughs of New York City. The maintenance of this database requires the work of a manager and two interns, as well as some outsourcing.

Mailings of 600 or more flyers may be sent using DTW's Bulk Mailing Service for a reduced non-profit rate of 14 to 17 cents per piece. To facilitate the successful use of DTW's mailing lists, members are given a Publicity Timeline, which maps out a model pre-performance schedule for preparing and delivering mailings of postcards, flyers or press releases. With DTW's in-house discount advertising agency, Dance Ads, members can place reduced-cost ads in a number of popular publications including *The Village Voice*, *Time Out New York*, *The New York Times*, *The Onion*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *HX Magazine*, *The Villager*, *Downtown Express*, *The Amsterdam News*, *Gay City News*, *Dance Magazine*, *Dance Annual Directory* and *Backstage*. This range of publications allows members to advertise to general readers in the five boroughs and beyond, as well as niche audiences through arts, dance and gay and lesbian publications.

Fiscal Sponsorship. The Member Projects Fund allows artists to raise money to support their work; members can accept fully tax-deductible contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations, including matching grants. A nine percent fee is deducted for funds raised up to

²¹ Cary Baker noted that much of their membership is quite similar to those in the Chicago focus groups.

\$5,000, while a six percent fee is deducted from funds over \$5,000. Unlike other organizations, the fiscal program is set up more for individual donations than foundations. However, this is shifting over time and foundations have never had a problem working with DTW. Since the majority of members are not incorporated, about 90 per year take advantage of this service. Artists generally raise between \$800 and \$3,000 per year, but some have raised as much as \$15,000-\$30,000 per year. In 2005, revenue from this program will account for \$24,000 in income; however it also requires extensive administrative and accounting support.

New Work Development. DTW assists members in creating work and developing professional skills. DTW's Doris Duke Performance Center houses two state-of-the-art rehearsal studios, which members can rent at 35% off regular rates. In addition, DTW will offer 1,000 hours of rehearsal space rental at the subsidized rate of \$10 an hour; this rate is available to members on a first-come, first-served basis and is limited to 20 hours per artist per year. Discount prices for DTW shows, classes, seminars and rental of the Artist Resource and Media Lab (ARM) allow members to affordably see the work of their peers and develop important skills and knowledge relative to their artistic careers.

Health Insurance. An important benefit of DTW membership is access to their group Health Insurance Plan. Members who are residents of New York City's boroughs and Nassau, Suffolk, Orange, Rockland and Westchester Counties of New York State are eligible to join Health Insurance Plan of New York-Health Maintenance Organization (HIP-HMO). Two plans are offered, both of which offer 24-hour access to medical care, office visits, routine health check-ups, specialist care, maternity and baby care, home health care and private-duty nursing, hospital care, surgery, emergency care, x-rays, alcohol and drug treatment, chiropractic care, gynecological care and routine foot care. Proof of self-employment is required by providing copies of a Federal Tax Return including a Schedule C. DTW has noticed about a decline in the use of this service since fees increased significantly (going up to \$370-\$415) three years ago.

DTW's Services Available to Non-Members

DTW's new Doris Duke Performance Center acts as a community center in many ways with its theatre, two rehearsal studios, administrative offices, lobby art exhibit and cafe all in one building. A community bulletin board maintains notices of auditions, teaching positions, jobs, classes, workshops, performances and housing.

Affordable Rehearsal Space. In addition to reasonable rental rates for DTW's own rehearsal studios, DTW created the Outer/Space program to counter the shortage of affordable rehearsal and performance spaces in Manhattan. Many artists had begun opening their own public studios in the outer boroughs, and this program helps these organizations offer affordable rehearsal space rental at \$10 an hour or less to the greater dance community. DTW has distributed \$30,000 per year through space grants, which make up the difference between normal rates and the \$10 an hour rate for 1,000 hours at each location.

Seminars & Classes. The Seminar Series addresses topics that are of concern to the performing arts community such as budgeting, touring, marketing, tax-preparation, funding and other community issues. Panel discussions and audience Q&A sessions give artists a chance to ask questions and learn from their peers. Recent seminar titles include *Exploring Inequity: Gender*

Bias in Dance, For the Benefit of Benefits, Economic Survival: 2004 Tax Preparation for Artists and Professional Infrastructure for Artists: Making Your Own Model. The Seminar Series is free to members and just \$5 per seminar for non-members. Classes are offered for professional artists, including a ten-session forum for experienced choreographers in the spirit of Bessie Schönberg's Laboratory in Composition. For younger dancers, Ellen Robbins, a prominent educator in the dance community, has been directing a children's dance program at DTW since the 1970s. Ongoing dance classes are held six days a week in addition to performance and workshops through DTW's Family Matters matinee series.

Digital Media & Technology. Created as part of DTW Digital, a new technology initiative, the Artist Resource and Media Lab (ARM) is a state-of-the-art computer facility at DTW that provides a full spectrum of digital tools that artists can use for creative and promotional purposes. A variety of interactive digital media classes are offered to familiarize performing artists with the tools for working with art and technology. Current classes and workshops in digital art include *Final Cut Pro Intensive, Making a Promotional Reel, Documenting Site-Specific Dance and Performance Events* and *Web Design*. Another program, Digital Symposiums, provides a platform for dialogue on related topics such as the aesthetics of multimedia performance and copyright concerns. In 2003, DTW inaugurated the Digital Fellows Program in which a group of artists, researchers and technologists whose work explores the interaction of the performing arts and technology are given a one-year fellowship to develop an artistic project. They receive a stipend, unlimited access to the ARM Lab and a presentation of their work in DTW's Doris Duke Performance Center. Other DTW Digital projects have tackled the challenges of networking and distance learning including a partnership with Ohio State University and Bebe Miller, in which a successful web-based distance learning forum has been created that connects New York artists to students at Ohio State.

DTW's Administration and Budget

DTW has 25 full time administrators. While it is hard to quantify the distribution of their efforts, there are two staff members specifically devoted to artist services and numerous staff from other departments (financial, health insurance, studio management) dedicate part of their time to services. Out of its overall budget of almost 4 million, DTW's services budget is \$747,000 and its income is \$798,000 (which includes pass-through monies from advertising and fundraising programs).

Dance Theater Workshop	
Artist Services	FY05
INCOME	
Member Advertising admin fees	18,565
Fiscal sponsorship admin fees	23,130
Member Health Insurance Service Fees	16,480
Member Dues	51,716
Rehearsal Space	71,305
Audience Mailing List	3,960
Mailing List Prep	5,896
Member & Press Kits	90
Press Labels	1,490
Reservation Service	250
Workshop Admissions	4,198
Earned	197,080
NYSCA Rehearsal	9,800
DCA- Health	39,800
DCA-Services	35,000
DCA Outer/Space	30,000
Total government	114,600
Duke (NYU Fellowship Project)	30,000
Total Foundation	30,000
Contributed	144,600
TOTAL INCOME	341,680
EXPENSES	
Direct Expenses	
Outer Space	27,000
Workshops & Seminars	1,094
NYU Fellowship Project	30,000
Printing & Mailing	3,593
Overhead	110,291
Payroll (2 full time, + 3 part time)	142,771
Total Direct Expenses	314,749
Surplus (Deficit)	26,931

Totals do not include fiscal sponsorship and member advertising pass through monies which are budgeted at \$267,991 and 4167,225 respectively, for a total of \$433,216.

Health insurance: Monthly premiums are not included. DTW charges a \$15 quarterly processing fee in addition to the monthly premiums, which are included under "Member Health Insurance Service Fees."

The Field

The following is based on website and written materials, as well as a presentation to the Advisory by Steve Gross, Executive Director.

Background

The Field occupies a unique niche in New York as the only organization that provides comprehensive programming for artists on a completely non-curated basis. Its programs focus on the needs of independent artists across the disciplines of dance, theater, music, text, performance art and film/video to create artwork, manage their careers and develop strategies to sustain a life in the arts. Through several performances series each year, The Field makes the work of hundreds of artists in New York and in network sites across the country available to the public.²²

Cultivating an atmosphere of experimentation and risk-taking is The Field's primary concern, and its programs feed the New York City performing community as a whole by keeping it "fertile with ideas, talent and resources."

Founded in 1985, The Field was shaped by emerging artists who developed a structure to help improve their artwork and counter the isolation that often comes with an artistic career. Its two-part mission is: to serve all artists, regardless of aesthetic, cultural background or level of development; and to remain responsive to the changing needs of the community of independent artists. The Field offers about 110 service hours per week to artists, including fiscal sponsorship of 250-300 artists every year. Programs grew organically, with focus on two areas: 1) helping artists in the creative process; and 2) helping artists disseminate their work and define a career that makes sense. The Field is organized around a grassroots metaphor, which means they do not "pick and choose" which artists to work with. They therefore work with more emerging to mid-range independent artists than may be served by other organizations. Steve Gross describes it as a "mix of 60's flower child situation and rigor. We want to provide a baseline of opportunity for any artist...to do work, show work, get a space grant, and attend a management workshop."

The Field's Services

The Field's services focus on new work, resources and professional development tools. Because it serves such a wide group, The Field readily receives funding from government sources that have mandates to support widely. Earned income is primarily derived from membership and fiscal sponsorship.

New Work Development. Two programs, Fieldwork and Fielday, support the development of new work. Fieldwork is a ten-week workshop that provides a space for artists to show works-in-progress and exchange feedback with peers. The program costs \$65 for members. There are five to ten groups every semester in New York and 16 sites around the country, including Chicago. At the end of the tenth week, there is a studio showing. Fieldwork showings include ground rules and a trained facilitator: viewers talk about what they see and artists do not talk. Steve Gross described the value in this process: "As a working artist, you get isolated. You can't see your own work objectively anymore. Showing to other artists makes it exciting again. Because people are watching, the artist knows if people checked out or hated a particular section. It

²² The Chicago Field conducts several programs annually, including Field Trips, Field Sessions and Showings. These programs are run by Nana Shineflug, Laurie Macklin and Judith Harding.

replicates an audience. You get people from different walks of life. You learn whose feedback you resonate with.” Fieldday is a non-curated, low-tech opportunity for artists to explore and develop their work through performance. This year’s Fieldday performances are organized around themes and artists benefit from audience responses to their work via feedback forms. The Field also gives away studio space for rehearsals or informal showings.

Artward Bound. Artward Bound transplants a group of 35-40 artists for a 10- to 14-day residency in one of several beautiful, out-of-town retreats including Earthdance (Plainfield, Massachusetts), The Silo Project (Leigh Valley, Pennsylvania), White Oak Plantation (Yulee, Florida), and Wild Meadows (Schellsburg, Pennsylvania). During the residency, artists participate in Fieldwork, focus on personal career development, and perhaps most significantly, take a break from their everyday financial concerns – the program is free, including lodging, meals and transportation from New York City. Artists that have been working for three years and have presented an amount of work equivalent to a full evening are eligible for this program and are chosen through a lottery.

Independent Performing Artist Resource Center (IPARC). The Field describes IPARC as an “office/information source/support network.” It offers a range of services and extensive facilities. Its resources are targeted to artists and include: a reference library of books, journals and periodicals; a computer lab featuring five laptops, photo scanners, and color and black and white printer/copiers; and access to research tools including *FC Search* (the Foundation Center’s database of grantmakers) and *Questia* (an online library of 50,000 books and 392,000 journals and articles). IPARC is staffed by working dance, theater and performance artists who are personally committed to the Field’s founding mission.

Several programs are available to artists at IPARC. Beehives are free programs in which artists and IPARC staff work together in “a beehive of activity” on written materials. Each meeting has a focus such as press kits, grant proposals or budgets, and the group setting allows artists to ask questions and exchange ideas with their peers and IPARC staff. Consultations are also available, both with staff and guest consultants, for feedback on written materials, training in using the center’s resources, and discussion of projects and career plans. Yearly, monthly, daily and hourly passes for IPARC are available, which helps artists customize services to their needs and budgets. Included in the cost of both the yearly and monthly passes are free coupons redeemable for workshops, consultations and reserved computer time.

Professional Development Services. The Field offers an array of workshops and seminars that address skill-building areas for artists who want to advance their artistic and professional abilities. “Management Nuts & Bolts” covers the basics of arts management, including mission statements, board development, promotional materials, the booking process, fundraising campaigns, events and related topics. The Field’s “Grant Writing Workshop” helps artists develop compelling fundraising materials, provides information about different funding sources, and explains the basics of proposal writing. Both of these workshops provide artists with hands-on practice developing their materials and an opportunity to get feedback. The “Ready to Book” workshop series, led by professional booking agent Jodi Kaplan, offers insight into how to get and work with an agent, everything you need to know about touring, and following up with presenters. “Topics” are one-time workshops that present an in-depth look at a specific subject

in arts management; upcoming titles include “Resumes for the Many Hats Artists Juggle” and “Do You Really Want to Form a Not-for-Profit Producing Company?” Workshops are designed to provide artists with traditional, baseline skills, but The Field also encourages attendees to think creatively and use whatever resources and skills are most relevant to their situation.

Two of The Field’s programs emphasize the unique benefits of learning in a group environment. Group Coaching for Artists and Peer Mentoring help artists develop a sustainable support network in which they can share experiences, exchange information and advice, and support each other in addressing artistic and career challenges. These sessions are facilitated by Martha Williams, a specialist in artist coaching, and are designed to give participants the tools to take action to find more productivity and satisfaction in their work.

The Field also offers an office share to artists at \$375-\$455 per month, which can be split between artists. Professional advice about touring and a list of potential sites is available at Gotour.org. This new website provides information about touring work to locations around the country, and provides a way for artists to learn details about over 250 performing sites in various locations.

Publications. The Field has also published several guides for artists. “The SmART Guide: Space Chase” and “The SmART Guide: Self Production” were created in collaboration with Dance Theatre Workshop. The first is a directory of performance and rehearsal spaces, as well as a compilation of out-of-town festivals, residencies and artist colonies. The second is a directory of services and providers including graphic designers, printers, lighting designers, movers, costumers, videographers, and more. “The Funding Guide for Independent Artists” provides a listing of financial resources and grants available to independent artists.

Fiscal Sponsorship. The Non-Profit Sponsorship Program enables independent artists to secure funds to achieve their artistic and career goals by allowing them to apply for grants that require 501(c)3 status and accept tax-deductible donations of money and goods from individuals. The Field has been involved in fiscal sponsorship for the last 15 years and currently brings in over a million dollars on behalf of artists, primarily from foundations, corporations and government grants. In the past, The Field charged an 8% fee for this service, but as of January 1, 2005, it introduced a new model of sponsorship called “Raise All You Want.” Rather than charging artists a percentage of money raised as a fee for sponsorship, The Field now offers this service for a flat-fee of \$150 a year plus the cost of membership. The Field believes that this new model will serve artists better by putting more of artists’ funds in their own hands. Gross noted that funders who refused to give money to artists who were being sponsored were “few and far between.” In terms of accountability for the funds and reporting, Gross notes that most artists are highly reliable in following regulations and there have been very few problems.

The Field’s Administration and Budget

The Field has five part time staff, who are all also working artists and “have an ear to the ground in a different way.” Most of the staff time is devoted to programs, with only about 10 hours per week devoted to fundraising. Staff work 15-35 hours a week at \$20/hour, which amounts to \$160,000 and accounts for almost half of The Field’s budget. While the organization has to do a bit of cobbling together to meet its budget, Gross commented that they are able to find funding

sources: “We do get funding – The Field serves a segment that is unwieldy, uninformed. They throw money at us, to give those artists some support. Our services are free or inexpensive. They are not sexy, but part of the infrastructure. We are supporting a baseline of opportunity for artists.” Services are provided à la carte and all services other than sponsorship are available to non-members.

The Field		
Organizational Budget		FY04
INCOME		
Earned Income		
Membership		31,119
Workshop, Field Forward Network Fees & Office Share Fees		48,957
Non-Profit Sponsorship Fees		38,659
Ticket Sales		1,438
Fundraising Event		6,876
Contributed Income		
Government Support		40,500
Foundation Support		127,500
Corporate Support		10,772
Board Contributions		5,780
Individual Contributions		12,710
Interest		501
TOTAL INCOME		324,812
EXPENSES		
Personnel		
Program Administration & Taxes		158,047
Health Insurance		19,473
Technical		1,093
Workshop Facilitators and Additional Administration		30,639
Marketing		24,328
General Expenses		
Space Rental		43,739
Performing Artist Resource Center Start-up (Equipment & Renovation)		19,145
Utilities & Phone		4,439
Offices Expense (supplies)		13,319
Insurance, Equipment and Fees		8,905
Local Travel		3,403
Subscriptions/Dues		1,028
Website		4,769
Fundraising Event		4,418
Artist Travel (programs)		18,522
Total Direct Expenses		355,267
Surplus (Deficit)		(30,455)
Assets at end of 2003		32,567
Fund Balance		2,112

Budget does not include \$694,899 in sponsored artists' "pass through" monies.

Dance/NYC

The following was developed from written information provided by Dance/USA, and a presentation by Christine Kite, Administrator.

Background

In 2001, Dance/USA established Dance/NYC as its first local branch office dedicated to providing advocacy on behalf of the New York dance community, centralizing and making accessible useful information for and about dance in New York, and raising the visibility of the dance community within New York City, much the same way that Dance/USA functions for the national dance field. In keeping with one of Dance/USA's major priorities – professional development for artists and administrators – Dance/NYC strives to complement the professional development opportunities sponsored by other organizations based in New York City.

Several years prior to that time, leaders in the NYC funding community expressed an increasing concern that no one was "at the table" speaking on behalf of New York City's full and diverse dance community in dialogues addressing the spectrum of arts and community life in New York. Without immediate action, they thought, this void will have consequences for dance as various sectors move forward to stake out the City's cultural future. (Simultaneously, the NYC-based Dance/USA members were seeking more service from Dance/USA, and the Dance/USA Board of Trustees had identified the need to strengthen regional relationships.) Massive restructuring of federal arts support was cited as a particular concern, along with shifting trends in private sector philanthropy, sharp decreases in national touring, lack of experienced administrative personnel to compensate for attrition and turn-over, increased competition for scarce resources, and the breakdown of a traditional progression of career development. Voices from the field were clear and consistent – top priorities were procurement of affordable rehearsal space; sustained support to mid-career artists; expanded operating, marketing and commissioning support; a wider range of performance venues; and improved management capabilities for dance companies.

Dance/USA formalized a relationship with the professional dance community in New York, including hiring a full-time staff person and assistant, to champion the art form and establish and test mechanisms for centralizing information and resources at the local level over an initial period of four years (2002-2005). The goal in this pilot phase was for New York's dance community to be empowered to speak with a unified voice and strengthen collective visibility to effectively address issues of common concern.

Dance/NYC's Services

Dance/NYC serves professional dance in the five boroughs of New York City through five focus areas: community building, awareness, advocacy and data gathering, real estate and professional development.

Building a Community. Two of Dance/NYC's primary goals are to encourage interaction within the New York community and form connections that go beyond the community. As Dance/NYC's administrator Christine Kite explains, the organization is uniquely positioned to make headway in both strengthening the local dance community and expanding beyond it: "We

are different. We are neutral. We don't curate, produce or pick. Our services are open to everyone, from the smallest 'non-company' company to the largest company." As Kite said, "We see ourselves as being dance's meeting place." Dance/NYC hosts a variety of meetings and happy hours to encourage social interaction in the community between individuals who might benefit from knowing each other. For example, a recent happy hour brought together arts administration students from local college programs and independent artists in need of help. And, by building organizational relationships Dance/NYC has facilitated more coordination of services between organizations such as Dance Theatre Workshop, ArtNY, The Field, Exploring the Metropolis, and others. Small-scale collaboration has already taken place, such as the cross-promotion of events, and the organizations have begun to develop larger projects together.

Awareness. Dance/NYC has effectively built awareness with its award-winning web site, www.dancenyc.org, the main service offered by the organization. The site is designed to stress the message of "NYC as dance capital of the world" to both the dance-interested public and the professional dance community. As a measure of its success, the site receives over 13,000 discrete visits each month and is roughly doubling in visitors every three months. For the general public, the site offers calendars of performances, dance-related events and NYC-based companies' touring schedules, as well as snippets of NYC dance history and interviews with artists. For the professional community, the site serves as an information hub featuring such services as a quarterly calendar of all identifiable funding deadlines in dance; a jobs and auditions listing; FAQ's; advocacy issues and alerts; funding issues and alerts; and extensive links to other dance services. Dance/NYC gets the word out about dance performances by sending over 1,400 "See Something Different" emails to funders and the dance-interested public each Monday morning, highlighting that week's events with direct links to box offices and company websites. The emails and performance listings are the only comprehensive event resource offered among the New York dance service organizations, and performances are listed six months in advance, increasing exposure for artists. *NYC DancePlaces*, a searchable database of rehearsal and performance spaces in the five boroughs, provides detailed information about over 350 sites in the area. Dance/NYC partnered with Exploring the Metropolis on the project and undertook 18 months of data gathering. Another service, offered in collaboration with NYC dance presenters, is the *DancePass Program*, which provides special discounts to dance performances across the city. These substantial discounts are only available to members of the professional community through Dance/NYC's website in an effort to enable practitioners to see more of each other's work more affordably. Maintaining and updating this extensive website is made easier by an administrative tool that was built as part of the design, which allows staff to add information without using html. The process is quick, allowing new pages to be on the site within several hours to a day, and interns can be easily trained to use the program. In order to ensure that the website remains a hub of relevant information for the dance community, Kite said, "We try to be proactive and reactive in a balanced way, to guess what people might need and also react to what they might want." For example, when a community member requested a list of freelance grantwriters, Dance/NYC took on the project and made the list available on the website.

Advocacy & Data Gathering. Dance/NYC acts as an advocate for the dance community by conducting research studies, meeting with New York senators and spearheading letter-writing campaigns, though the community is often unaware of these efforts until they are publicized by

Dance/NYC. Kite acknowledges that some of the positive effects that Dance/NYC has had on advocacy for the community are intangible and that “You can’t always get funding to be a good cheerleader.”

Dance/NYC has a considerable record of achievements in advocacy. The organization advocates for increased funding for dance at the state and city levels, and has undertaken two major research studies to support their case: “Where the Money Goes,” an analysis of where contributed income goes to NYC dance companies in terms of small, medium and large organizations, and “The Economic Activity of Dance in New York City,” an analysis of the role dance plays in the NYC economy. Smaller, informal studies have also been conducted, including analyses of space needs in the community and the role of gender in the awarding of grants. Most recently, Dance/NYC has been collaborating with other dance and arts service providers to tackle health care issues for dancers.

Several successful advocacy efforts have been targeted at the press including an analysis of the number of dance reviews published by *The New York Times* over the past three years. When Dance/NYC’s research backed up their observation of a decrease in dance reviews and an increased focus on pop culture, staff met with the arts and main editors at *The New York Times*, and ultimately helped to save the arts listings page that was slated to be cut from the paper. Dance/NYC has also led two successful letter-writing campaigns. The first was undertaken when *New York Magazine* announced it would let go of dance reviewer Tobi Tobias and not seek a replacement. Dance/NYC took proactive steps to help reinstate the critic by meeting with the magazine’s editor and motivating members of the dance community to send approximately 2,000 letters. The second letter-writing campaign was in response to an offensive ESPN ad campaign that featured the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders and the tagline “If it wasn’t for sports they’d just be dancers.” After Dance/NYC staff met with ESPN to explain why the ad was offensive to the dance community, ESPN responded by printing an apology. ESPN also created full page ads that ran in *Dance Magazine* and *The New York Times*, which featured former Pittsburgh Steelers football player Lynn Swann with the tagline “Without sports, we’d see dance only on stage” and the subtitle “Lynn Swann studied dance which improved his performance on the field.” Both of these campaigns proved how, working together, the dance community can effect positive change.

Real Estate. In one of the most expensive real estate markets in the country, Dance/NYC continues to address the needs of its constituents by developing non-traditional and new methods of service. Among them: Dance/NYC seeks to create affordable rehearsal space in unused office spaces in commercial buildings; the possible creation of a New York Dance Center – a complex of studios and office space for dance companies; and bringing to the attention of the dance community low-cost housing opportunities for artists and dance professionals.

Professional Development. Dance/NYC offers a range of professional development activities. Panel discussions are offered on topics such as copyright and choreography ownership issues, choreographer/composer collaborations, and “Meet the NYC Presenters,” while “The Next Step Seminars,” presented in collaboration with The Field, provides an eight-week course on the basics of arts management. The Roundtables are quarterly invited meetings of 5-15 persons in “like” jobs in dance and are designed to relieve the isolation that arts administrators and artists often feel, to create networking opportunities, and to share information and “how to’s.”

Currently, Dance/NYC offers Roundtables to various segments of the community such as: dancers and choreographers, executive directors of companies with budgets over \$1 million, executive directors of companies with budgets under \$1 million, development directors, finance directors, marketing directors, dance presenters, dance writers, dance service organizations and production managers. Dance/NYC offers other leadership training seminars including “The 101’s,” a series of dance basics for new artists and young arts administrators, and a two day Leadership/Renewal seminar, with professional faculty to strengthen management skills and to avoid burn-out for mid-sized company administrators, service organizations and artist representatives.

Dance/NYC’s Budget & Staff

Dance/NYC has a unique situation in that, as the first branch office of Dance/USA, their programs fall under the budget of this national organization. The major accounting and administrative aspects are handled by the main office, leaving the New York branch free to do programs and services with a greatly reduced administrative burden. Dance/USA fundraised for the first four years of operations and the vast majority of this funding comes from foundations. Special projects such as studies or website improvements depend on funds raised out of the New York office. While 35-40% of Dance/USA’s members are from the New York City area, Dance/NYC itself does not have a membership and does not charge for any of its services, and thus has no earned income (except for income from office rentals). Dance/NYC’s strategy for staffing is to keep the core staff small, and supplement it with interns and consultants for specific projects. This staffing strategy keeps ongoing administrative costs low, allowing the organization to expand and contract as necessary to respond to the dance community’s needs. For instance, a consultant handles the research and updating of funding deadlines for Dance/NYC’s website, with input via email from the dance community. The essential job description of a Dance/NYC staff member is a “resourceful person,” someone who can “do a lot of different things...write grants, change lights, roll Marley floor,” as Kite explained.

Dance/NYC (Line Item of Dance/USA Budget)	FY05
INCOME	
Foundations	328,500
NEA/General Operating Support	5,000
Misc.	16,600
TOTAL INCOME	350,100
EXPENSES	
Payroll, including benefits	181,339
Contract Fees - Short Term	27,500
Overhead/Office Lease	65,412
Telephone/Fax	5,200
Equipment	9,800
Office supplies and expenses	11,580
Travel and Entertainment	8,410
Tickets	1,200
Meeting Expenses	11,700
Dues, Subscriptions, Publications and Advertising	3,400
Speaker/Panelist Fees	22,300
Misc. Expense	1,519
Total Direct Expenses	349,360
Surplus (Deficit)	740

Pentacle

The following is based on Pentacle's website and an interview with Ivan Sygoda, Co-Director of Pentacle.

Background

For almost 30 years, artists and companies have used Pentacle's services and expertise to support their professional infrastructures, including booking, and allow more time for their own creative work. Artists and companies can join Pentacle as part of its "Dance Roster" or the "Pentacle Gallery," which offers reduced services and is geared more towards emerging artists.

Pentacle's Services

As a service organization, Pentacle's focus is on providing administrative and managerial support to dance companies and performing artists.

Booking. Described as their "most widely used and currently needed service," Pentacle participates in regional and national booking conventions to expose the work of their artists in different marketplaces. Additional efforts to solicit work for its artists include a 5,000 piece promotional mailing to presenters, listing in Stern's Performing Arts Directory, features on Pentacle's website and active solicitation of engagements. Pentacle offers two tiers of booking services. Its full booking, called the "Dance Roster," works on a retainer, where Pentacle actively solicits engagements on their behalf and retains a commission. The second, the "Pentacle Gallery," is geared more toward emerging artists who for the most part, are too edgy or new for commercial agents. Gallery artists receive all of the above promotional services, except for the active solicitation.

Sygoda described the way in which curation happens. For both tiers, Pentacle staff need to believe in the work and feel that “out of our mouths come a level of sincerity about the work... We have a sense of being a part of a family of single choreographer companies who are suitable for booking.” For Gallery artists, staff must have “a basic level of respect for each artist’s work... these artists are buying exposure... The work needs to be interesting and respectable, but not famous.” The cost for Gallery artists is \$2,500 per year with no commission. Pentacle’s booking services are structured in this way because, as he said, “It would be robbing people if it were not curated... Some people are buying hope and we try not to abuse that.”

Fiscal Administration. Member organizations that have not-for-profit status can take advantage of Pentacle’s fiscal administration services which include: daily banking; payment of company bills; monthly bank reconciliation; computerized financial statements; payroll administration and handling of the company’s reporting requirements to federal, state and city agencies; budget assistance; and financial planning. Similar fiscal services are also available to unincorporated artists on a yearly or project basis through Pentacle’s Foundation for Independent Artists, Inc. and Unique Projects, Inc. For companies that prefer to maintain their bookkeeping in-house, Pentacle offers the opportunity to create a computerized general ledger and payroll system. Pentacle staff will post to the general ledger on a frequency based on the company’s needs, as well as handle payments to salaried individuals, the paying of applicable taxes, and the filing of payroll based federal, state and local reports. Companies using Pentacle’s accounting services can also access an independent CPA who specializes in not-for-profit accounting. There is a degree of self-selection that happens on the part of the artists due to the fee structure, which is tied to budget size; the fee ranged from 1.5% to 6% of their budget size. The smallest company of \$15,000 pays 6% of their budget, or \$900 and the largest company with a budget of \$950,000 pays \$15,000 per year. An artist with a very small budget would probably not be able to allocate enough funds for fiscal administration, so as director Ivan Sygoda said, “the curation happens by the artist’s own structure and size... they decide to come and pay us.”

Grant Writing. Limited grant writing services are available only to artists who are receiving other fiscal services. Pentacle will handle the preparation, submission and administration of applications to the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York Department of Cultural Affairs.

Public Relations & Graphics. Pentacle provides publicity services for local and out-of-town performing artists who are planning self-produced concert seasons in New York City. These services include preparation of a general press release, public service announcements, VIP letters, personal invitations, concert programs, and front of house obligations. Pentacle’s own designers are available to create customized promotional materials for artists and companies including posters, flyers, invitations, brochures, press kits, stationery, and website design.

Consultancies & Help Desk. One-on-one consultations are available with Pentacle’s directors and staff members in all areas of arts administration. For artists and companies that wish to build longer-term relationships, the Help Desk program matches emerging and mid-career creators of dance and performance art with mentors who are highly experienced in dance administration. These mentors dedicate time outside of their own careers to working with Help Desk artists over a two-year project period, and often longer on an informal basis due to the strength of the

relationships built. The stated goal of Help Desk is “to help strengthen these artists’ infrastructures so that they can maintain a stable professional base, from which they may nurture their creativity.” To achieve this goal, both artist and mentor submit quarterly reports that detail their accomplishments and track their progress.

In addition to the close personal attention that Help Desk artists receive from their mentors, several other services and programs are offered. In an effort to financially assist Help Desk artists, most of whom lack steady administrative assistance, Pentacle hired a full-time staff member to serve the needs of Help Desk participants. The Help Desk Resource Coordinator can provide any kind of administrative service at the affordable rate of \$15 an hour. Other financial support comes in the form of a stipend from Help Desk during the first year of an artist’s participation and earmarked funds that enable participants to see the New York seasons of other Help Desk artists for free.

Pentacle keeps Help Desk participants informed about pertinent funding deadlines, meetings and performances via email, and also allows participants to contact each other regarding needs such as technicians for a production or information about other resources. Monthly meetings for all artists, mentors and administrators involved in Help Desk provide a personal forum for participants to discuss topics of interest, learn from outside experts or discuss the Help Desk program itself. Pentacle also assists Help Desk artists in gaining exposure at booking conferences and contacting presenters. In 2002, several participants were presented at the Association of Performing Arts Presenters conference, and Help Desk curated showcases at the Columbia Festival for the Arts in Maryland and at the International Dance Fair in Dusseldorf, Germany. Help Desk is also in the process of compiling a database of presenters around the country who have booked Help Desk artists, which will include comprehensive information about the presenters and comments from the artists and mentors.

Arts Administrators Together. Another series of meetings, Arts Administrators Together, evolved out of the success of Help Desk. This group is made up of dance professionals who work in administration and management – all managers, administrators, board members, and consultants are welcome. With the goal of strengthening dance administration and management, this group is working to build a supportive, proactive community that can offer professional support and a forum for group discussion.

Educational Programs. Pentacle offers educational programming that gives high school and college students insight into and experience with all aspects of dance. These educational programs take several forms and are customized to suit the needs of the particular school. A project for public high schools called “Dance: Behind the Scenes” focuses on the backstage work that makes it all happen including production, arts administration and management. Pentacle designed this program so that students would learn more about the dance world while using important professional skills related to writing, math, problem solving and critical thinking. In partnership with the New York City Department of Education, Pentacle administers the Summer Arts Institute, a free five-week program for public school students in eighth to twelfth grades. Students learn about the range of career options in the visual and performing arts, and get assistance in applying for arts magnet high schools and higher education programs with an arts focus. New in 2005, Pentacle partnered with Hunter College to offer a two-day forum entitled

“Exploring Opportunities: The Real World of Dance.” The seminar, which was open to current dance students, alumni and members of the dance community, focused on the critical information that participants need to “survive and thrive” in the profession. The program allowed time for group discussion, working sessions and featured speakers who are experts in the field. Pentacle and Hunter College plan to continue exploring their partnership and programming in an effort to serve the Hunter dance program and the college dance community in the New York area.

Pentacle’s budget was not available.

Collaborations Among New York Service Organizations

In general, the service organizations profiled in this chapter avoid competing with each other; for example, The Field has intentionally not offered bulk mail and advertising, since DTW provides these services. However, a number of the organizations collaborate on key services for the dance community, including the following.

- **Professional Development.** “The Next Step Seminars” are an eight-week course on the basics of arts management, offered through a collaboration between Dance/NYC and The Field.
- **Publications.** The Field and DTW worked together to create two important publications for the dance community: “The SmART Guide: Space Chase” and “The SmART Guide: Self-Production.” Dance/NYC has incorporated much of the information from Space Chase onto their website.
- **Health Care and Insurance.** DTW, The Field and Dance/NYC, along with Elsie Management, have joined together to publicize a health care opportunity that could be a great service for low-income artists in the New York area. Woodhull Hospital is part of New York’s public hospital system and is located at the border between the Williamsburg and Bushwick sections of Brooklyn. The hospital offers “HHC Options,” a financial assistance program available to uninsured individuals that reduces the patient bill to an affordable level. Billing varies according to salary guidelines, but covers individuals who make up to \$37,240 annually and higher for those who are married or have dependents. Prices for care are significantly reduced. For example, office visits range from \$15 to \$60; prescriptions filled at the hospital cost \$10 each and won’t exceed \$40 even for more than four prescriptions; outpatient psychotherapy and dentistry are offered at the same per visit price; and the cost of a hospital stay is capped at \$150 for an individual’s entire visit, depending on income level and dependents. Staff from these service organizations made a site visit and found the Woodhull Hospital to be largely renovated, friendly, accessible and comprehensive in its services, contrary to the reputation of New York’s public hospitals. They plan to conduct additional site visits to the other 10 public hospitals in New York City and report back to the artist community on how each stacks up, possibly through a Town meeting so that the community can meet directly with hospital administrators.
- **Fiscal Sponsorship.** DTW and The Field both offer fiscal sponsorship. DTW is focused more on individual contributions, whereas The Field has historically been geared toward foundation and corporate grants. This line of distinction is blurring. (A third organization, Fractured Atlas, is also offering fiscal sponsorship at highly competitive rates.) The two organizations have intentionally tried not to compete with one another and have kept the percentage that they retain the same.

7. Summary of Findings

The research conducted produced a wealth of information about dance service provision in Chicago. Service organizations are assisting artists in many ways, yet gaps remain between existing services and the needs of artists.

Comparative Document

As the Comparative Document shows, a wide array of services are currently being offered to the arts community in Chicago. Until now, detailed information about these services did not exist in one place and artists were not fully aware of them. Having this information accessible, and eventually on a website, may increase usage of services. The Comparative Document has already proved useful to some local artists and organizations, as well as in planning projects in other cities.

Artist Focus Groups

The well-attended focus groups revealed much about artists' major issues in managing their work and careers and their needs for services. *As these discussions showed, solving the problem of service provision may have less to do with the quantity of services that are available and more with artists' awareness of and access to those services, as well as the relevance of those services to their needs.*

Demographics. The 35 artists who attended the focus groups had been working in Chicago for a long time, with an average of over 14 years in the field. The majority (two-thirds) have nonprofit status, which brings with it a higher level of administrative responsibility than being independent. However, the majority of artists also have no paid staff; only three percent of those with budgets under \$100,000 have paid assistance of any kind. Artists are strongly committed to paying dancers; if additional funds became available, many artists said they would first use the money to compensate their dancers. The majority of artists derive income from their own sources including jobs, box office revenue, and individual donations; a much smaller percentage is supported by foundations and government funding.

Barriers to Accessing Services. Despite the existence of services, accessibility can vary for artists due to a number of factors related to eligibility, as well as the appropriateness of services to artists' real needs:

- Eligibility requirements show that most of the substantive services are geared toward nonprofit organizations. This leaves independent artists with fewer options. One of the issues that brought up frustration was the need to form nonprofits in order to access funds. Artists wished there were other models or opportunities for accessing support.
- Access to services is exacerbated by the need for paid staff. The artists themselves are caught between working their day jobs to finance their companies and producing the art itself. This leaves little or no time to attend to the administrative details, let alone to work with service providers, which are often only open during the normal work day. The

reality is that artists lack the human power to attend workshops, obtain information, attend meetings with consultants, and complete tasks that would be required by service organizations.

- A number of organizations offer volunteer assistance from qualified consultants. Those artists who had accessed these services had mostly positive comments about them. But many of the services require artists to deal with long waiting periods. Artists either have to wait for consultants to be assigned to them, or hope that a volunteer selects them over arts ensembles; in actuality pro bono consultants tend to pass over artists with small companies in favor of larger, more established organizations. This may leave artists with little control over the process, and no alternative but to wait and hope that they are selected by a lawyer, accountant, or other consultant.
- The activities of service organizations are not always offered on a regular basis, though the larger organizations are more reliable in this regard. Artists may not be aware of activities. This means that the Comparative Document of services may imply ongoing events that are in actuality either rarely offered or not well-attended.
- Artists appreciate that service organizations have gathered resource information about fundraising and other topics and made it available to them. However, the quality and comprehensiveness of information varied from organization to organization; with some organizations artists had to dig for information and in other instances they felt overwhelmed by the amount and complexity of information. Information resources are most useful when there is dedicated staff available to assist artists.
- Though there are options for publicizing information about performances, there are not enough of them and their reach is limited. An important observation was made about websites that may exist, but which are either incomplete or difficult to navigate. There is not any one information hub that is fully serving the needs of artists. Technology should be used effectively; a high-quality website is much more than a URL and a calendar, but a site that is planned and designed carefully to take into account the needs and interests of artists and audiences.
- Some of the smaller service organizations themselves either lack adequate staff or are run on a solely volunteer basis; this may leave them unable to respond to artists' requests for information or assistance.
- Finally, another barrier is cost. Some artists prefer to work day jobs and pay for assistance, because payment brings a level of control that does not exist with volunteers.

Artists' Priorities for Service Provision

Administration. The conundrum of administration came up often and in many different ways. Securing staff and finding time are the biggest barriers to using services and perhaps to organizational growth and stability. Artists who were aware of services in New York longed for

what was provided by leading organizations. DTW saves artists from having to obtain nonprofit status to access services. Pentacle and the Field offer targeted services to specific kinds of artists and can meet artists' need for administration without requiring them to commit to hiring their own staff. *There is a common thread among many of the needs expressed by artists: they want services that would save time and money—by both circumventing artists' lack of staff and streamlining access to information.* Artists wondered if a service organization could set up effective relationships with arts administration programs, which could then provide students to work as either interns or part-time staff. But, feelings about volunteer assistance and interns were mixed. There was a tradeoff between having this assistance, versus having to take the time to train people who were either unpaid or likely to be temporary.

Networking and Information Exchange. Artists desire more opportunities to network and build relationships with the larger community. This was the issue about which they were most passionate. They desire more connections with other artists through forums about their work and administrative issues; with audiences, to gain a better understanding of who attends and why; and funders, who they feel are not aware of their work or issues. Even though their hours are limited, artists would find the time to gather as a group, in order to form relationships and decrease the isolation that can exist when working independently. Artists also desired more opportunity to share works-in-progress with their peers.

Artists voiced a strong desire for a comprehensive hub, probably in the form of a website, which would provide information on everything from performances to space rental. This site would serve two major functions: 1) as a center for audience development, by publicizing performances and encouraging ticket sales; and 2) as a resource bank, allowing artists to save time on their own research by accessing everything from costume designers to grant deadlines to rehearsal space and possibly access to qualified help. Such information would save them time, money, and hassle.

Advocacy. Finally, artists made a strong call for advocacy and leadership on behalf of dance in Chicago. There is no presenter here who is, they thought, serving as a proponent in taking their work to the next level. There is no champion—no one to be present at tables to speak for the art form overall. In artists' view, there are also few connections with the dance field outside of the city.

Audience Development. Artists would be thankful for anything that could help them to understand, form connections with, and build audiences. The website above would, they thought, help substantially. Though not stated outright, it can be inferred that they would appreciate and benefit from the information that has been gathered through the Hubbard Street marketing project.

Health Insurance. Although not discussed in detail, health insurance was a major interest to artists. Any assistance with access to information would be appreciated, including affordable plans for which artists would be eligible.

Professional Development. Artists would benefit from professional development in the areas of board development, marketing, and fundraising. They thought that one option that would help is mentorships with seasoned managers who could train them in administrative skills.

Press Coverage. Artists desire better relations with the press and more coverage, although there was little consensus on how this could be achieved.

Space. A strong desire was expressed for a centralized space for meetings, performances, and classes. Moming was spoken of as an example of the ways in which a common space can provide service and help to establish a sense of community. While artists understood that this would not happen in the short-term, they hoped that such a space could be a long-term goal.

The Role of Chicago Service Organizations

A number of Chicago organizations are offering a wide range of services. Their services are largely complementary and there was little duplication of efforts. The most frequently used service organizations were the Chicago Music and Dance Alliance, Links Hall, Lawyers for the Creative Arts, Arts and Business Council of Chicago, the Department of Cultural Affairs, and Donors Forum of Chicago. However, the quality of services varied, as did their relevance to artists' lives and ways of working. Both Links Hall and the Arts and Business Council were viewed most positively. Though the Music and Dance Alliance was the most frequently accessed, reservations were expressed about the quality of its services. The remaining organizations received mixed to positive reviews. Artists who had accessed services reaped benefits from them, although some had had problematic experiences with consultants who had been assigned to them. However, as outlined above, most of the problems related more to access to, or relevance of, the service than with the quality of product or service provided. In addition to the six above, a long list of organizations were used by fewer than 20% of artists.

The organizations that were interviewed each fulfill a unique niche in service provision, and can play different roles in dance provision in the future. Lawyers for the Creative Arts offers services in incorporation and general business planning and has a long history of assisting organizations in making the decision to incorporate; their service provision is limited but straightforward, and they have assisted longstanding organizations such as Hubbard Street. Links Hall meets the needs of independent artists to develop and show work; their space and performance services for smaller groups are vital, and staff believe there is a need to expand and enhance the quantity of services if new resources are made available. Arts and Business Council targets support in the areas of board development, strategic planning, and organizational assessment, but works most effectively with organizations that are incorporated and have a functioning board. Though opinions of it were favorable, it offers little for the independent artist, apart from workshops. Department of Cultural Affairs feels that having a strong dance organization with which to collaborate would be a major boost to what it could offer, and would bring the services that it can offer to dance in line with what it already offers to other art forms. Because of its affiliation with the city, DCA can provide a pathway to a much larger universe of individuals who may be interested in attending and supporting dance. Donors Forum provides extensive fundraising research and insight into the priorities of funders, as well as assistance with accessing that information. However, some artists found it overwhelming to find the time to

access and navigate the enormous amount of information that is housed at DFC. The League of Chicago Theaters was not discussed in focus groups, nor did it appear to be considered a major dance service provider. Yet it has potential for serving the dance field through its tried and true audience development and marketing services. The League's services are open to dance, but they are more appropriate for dance companies than individuals. As conveyed by the Sacred Dance Guild, the liturgical community operates quite differently from the concert dance world. Though it exists mainly in churches, there may eventually be potential to develop crossover audiences. It is difficult to pinpoint services that would be of use to concert dance artists as well as liturgical dance at this time. Perhaps the study of liturgical dance that was funded by CCT will aid in developing relationships between these two groups and eventually determining areas of crossover.

Service Provision in Other Cities

It is interesting that many of the major cities across the country are currently addressing the question of dance service provision. In the past decade, dance service organizations that once thrived have closed in several cities, including Chicago, Philadelphia and Minneapolis. In contrast, Washington, DC has never had such an organization. All three of the cities in Section 5 of this report have been meeting and planning to discuss artists' needs and two of the three have gathered advisory groups. Two of the cities are looking at forming service organizations; for the time being, Minneapolis is addressing service needs by funding specific projects rather than a service organization.

Inevitably, questions arose about why dance service organizations that used to exist closed their doors. Most of these organizations shared certain characteristics related to their structure, staffing and funding. First, the organizations were run by staff who were recruited when they were young, and who worked tirelessly, exhibiting great loyalty to artists and the dance field. However, staff eventually burnt out due to the heavy workload and low pay. Second, as Douglas Sonntag stated, and the research indicates, dance service organizations have historically been under-resourced. Several dance service organizations folded with substantial debt. Lisa Tylke, former executive director of the Chicago Dance Coalition describes the situation there, which may be indicative of what happened in other cities: "When you have 70% contributed income, but you have no director of development, no board funding levels, and it's not a moneyed board, that's a losing combination by any textbook. There was only so much money to do programs...and pay staff to stay around...I literally could not breathe [from the burden of trying to balance the budget]." Funders were reluctant to make long term commitments, preferring instead to fund for a while, take a year off, and then want to support a new project. Tylke advised that "It takes a long time for a service entity to develop" and suggested that any start-up organization be given five years of salary and other support. Finally, two counteracting changes were at work at the national level: the dance field itself was proliferating, while the resources to support it were shrinking. In the dance boom of the 1980s literally hundreds of dance companies and independent artists sprouted up across the country. After the NEA's cuts in 1995, funding possibilities were no longer available for service organizations, as well as independent

choreographers and small companies. This demise in support had ripple effects on the local level, as detailed by Sally Sommer in 2000:²³

In looking back at the 1970s and 1980s, the issue to emerge was how would the NEA be able to sustain the proliferation of dance it had initially encouraged?...The interplay among touring, individual fellowships and presenter [support] gave birth to what one person called a healthy “ecosystem” of dance. The most severe blow was the demise of the NEA’s individual artist fellowships in 1995...a true loss for the creative process. The devastating effect was strain on the service organizations and the feeder system. The infrastructure was stretched to the breaking point.²⁴

Comparison of the Four Cities Today

It appears that the needs for services are similar in the four cities researched, and focus on:

- Centralized sources of information. Most cities are interested in a formal website that would serve as an identity and hub for dance; connect artists with information needed to fund and produce their work; and inform audiences about performances.
- Forums for artists and other peer groups. Artists desired mechanisms for convening to discuss issues of common concern; view each other’s work; and form relationships to offset the feeling of working in isolation.
- Audience development. All cities desire effective ways to reach and expand audiences. Though there are options for publicizing information about performances, there are not enough of them and their reach is limited.
- Advocacy. Artists are concerned that there is not one voice representing them at tables where issues are discussed and decisions made. The lack of such a representative is hindering their visibility, the resources that are allocated to the art form on a local level, and even policy makers’ understanding of their needs.
- Capacity building. The interest level in the issue of organizational capacity varied from city to city. While administration is a substantial issue in Chicago, it is not a problem that those interviewed in Minneapolis think can be solved.

²³ The assertions in this paragraph came primarily from the Chicago research, but are consistent with Callahan’s own experience of running the NEA’s Services to the Dance Field funding program (which was done away with in 1994), as well as her prior research on dance communities in Chicago, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and San Francisco.

²⁴ Sommer, Sally and Suzanne Callahan. From an unpublished report for The Pew Charitable Trusts in 2000.

Below is a preliminary comparison of each city regarding its history of service provision, planning, and service priorities. (Note that this chart was developed from written materials and has not been reviewed by representatives in each city.)

COMPARISON OF THE FOUR CITIES IN:	Chicago	Philadelphia	Minneapolis	DC
Services Structure				
Had a service organization in the past	X	X	X	
Has a service organization now				new
Operates by projects taken on By organizations and individuals	X	X	X	
Has a formal Advisory Board	X	X		informal
Has paid staff dedicated to services				X
Received foundation support	X	X	for projects	X
Planning				
Formal study conducted on community and/or services	X			X
Town meetings to discuss service provision	not yet	X	X	X
Timing of new service organization	tbd- study done in 2004-05	2005-2007	No plans to date	2005-2007 Study done in 2003
Top Service Priorities				
Information exchange/hub	X	X		X
Audience development	X	X	X	X
Networking among artists	X	X	X	X
Advocacy	X	X	X	X
Capacity building	X	X		
Space	Later	Later		

Models for Service Provision in New York

New York can boast one of the largest dance communities in the country and probably the world. Though each major U.S. city is unique, New York does provide a broad and impressive array of services for its dance makers and its success can serve as a model for Chicago. In offering the range and quality of services that it does, New York service organizations remove a considerable amount of administrative burden from artists. They support dance makers in a variety of key ways:

- A wide range of services are geared toward the individual artist with limited or no staff. Services include one-on-one assistance and staffing in booking, financial administration, fiscal sponsorship, advertising, and office space rental. They also includes professional development in a wide arrange of areas all aspects of management (including fundraising, marketing, booking and touring) as well as help with creative process (through works in progress showings, peer feedback, and subsidized rehearsal space).
- Select services are geared to benefit the field overall. These include advocacy with municipal, state and national legislators, funders and corporations. Dance leaders find creative solutions for issues that affect the field overall, such as the decrease in press coverage about dance, or the real estate crisis. (Both Dance/NYC and DTW have played leadership roles in these crises.)

- Time- and money-saving tools are geared toward the dance field and the general public. Services include websites that offer information on performances, which serves audiences as well as artists. Websites also offer information that saves each artist from time-consuming duplication of research about fundraising, touring, and other areas. Written tools include guides to press relations, and advertising, as well as press and rate lists. These tools are particularly helpful for artists with no staff, and are offered by Dance/NYC, DTW and The Field.
- Connections to the national dance field are maintained through vocal leadership. Leaders provide connections between local artists and other cities through assisting with touring and arranging artistic retreats. Some services have been replicated in other cities (such as Field Works, which now exists in 16 other sites). Dance leaders represent the city's artists, issues and needs at national gatherings.
- Service organizations communicate regularly and collaborate when it will benefit the field. Dance leaders have established a congenial and flexible way of collaborating on projects, such as publicity (both Pentacle and DTW address this need) and health care (an affordable alternative clinic is being explored by numerous organizations). Though services occasionally are duplicated (such as fiscal sponsorship), the overlap is healthy due to the enormous size of the dance community and because organizations understand the field's needs, talk to each other and coordinate their efforts.
- Leadership is paramount, and is integrally tied to service provision. Service providers can boast of the ineffable asset of leadership. Individuals such as David White, Cathy Edwards, Steve Gross, Bob Yesselman, Laurie Uprichard, Janice Shapiro, Ted Berger, Carla Peterson, and Ivan Sygoda have devoted decades to understanding, serving, representing and speaking for the dance field. They are supported by another generation of administrators who are committed and talented, many of whom are artists themselves, and who will likely assume positions of greater responsibility in the coming years.

It is crucial that New York City offers a substantial amount of support for dance services, in both contributed and earned income. Details about budget categories are enlightening:

- It is estimated that over \$1 million in support goes for salaries and benefits for dance services. The full time positions for three of the four major dance service providers in Manhattan, who are associated with administrative support for services, including DTW, The Field, and Dance/NYC, is over half a million. Staff costs for three of the four major dance service organizations are very close to one another, at about \$175,000. The half a million figure does not include Pentacle and does not even take into account staff support from other positions at those organizations (such as prorated portions of DTW's 25 staff members). The figure also does not include other organizations that are known primarily for creative development and presenting but also offer crucial services (such as Danspace Project, Movement Research, and the Joyce Theater, as well as many others). Nor does it include service providers that are multidisciplinary, such as NYFA.²⁵ Therefore, the real

²⁵ NYFA provides a range of services for artists in all disciplines including extensive online resources, funding and other support services for artists. NYFA Source, a national website directory of awards and funding opportunities,

administrative salaries associated with dance services (not even presenting) is arguably much higher.

- Budgets for dance service provision for three of the four organizations averages between \$300,000-\$400,000. This is modest considering the impact and reach of these organizations. Again, this does not include organizations focused on creative development. If pass through monies are included, the budget size more than doubles (The Field provides double its own budget in fiscal pass through monies, and DTW provides double its services budget in pass through monies for advertising and fundraising).
- Contributed support from foundations and government comprise about two thirds of these budgets and earned income makes up the other third. Contributed income for three of the four organizations totals \$657,000 and earned is \$341,000, with a total of \$1.015 million. Since Dance/NYC has almost no earned income, it skews the percentage; the other two organizations exist on about half earned income. And, most of this earned income does not come from membership dues, but rather fees for services. To generate earned income they offer services that artists are willing to pay for, at modest prices. Therefore, in many ways, these organizations are the defacto staff for SMID-type artists, who do not have staff.

In summary, the research and presentations showed that New York is successfully providing most or all of the very services that Chicago artists say they need. It accomplishes this through employing experienced leaders, who design crucial programs that are relevant to artists needs, and working with funders, both public and private, who allocate adequate resources for these programs.

Other Suggestions for Service Provision

Lessons Learned. The following suggestions come from service providers and have implications for the way in which a service organization can function effectively.

- Service organizations are critical in fighting isolation and connecting artists to their peers – they provide a voice and a sense of identity, and encourage solidarity. They provide services that might not be exciting but are nonetheless needed. However, a service entity should be wary of presenting, which can create conflict with its mission of service. The realm of presenting raises constituents' expectations and can cause resentment for artists who are not selected.
- Careful thought should be given to the pros and cons of a membership model that promises artists a set amount of services for a set fee; instead, a model that may be more effective

provides information for artists working not just in New York, but in communities across the country. NYFA's Building Up Infrastructure Levels for Dance (BUILD) grant program provides funds to New York based choreographers seeking to enhance their companies' infrastructure and management capacity. Currently, 15 dance related artists receive fiscal sponsorship for their projects along with six emerging dance organizations. Every other year, NYFA awards approximately 14 fellowships to choreographers based in NY State. According to Janice Shapiro, Managing Officer for NYFA, the organization allocates one full time staff person, at approximately \$55,000, to administer BUILD; this does not account for other multidisciplinary staff who allocate some time to dance. View their website at www.nyfa.org.

would encourage members to pay a set amount that would go for the betterment of the field, rather than for reciprocal services that they themselves would receive. A new organization might explore ways to generate earned income from members. The League of Chicago Theaters should be more closely examined for lessons that might be learned from their success in working with both for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

- Service organizations must be cognizant of artists' struggle to balance the art with the administration, and anything that they can do to fill that gap is worth considering. It is unrealistic to expect artists to have the time, or the expertise, to perform both of these jobs well.
- There is substantial need for fiscal sponsorship on the part of artists. Because of the extent to which fiscal sponsorship came up, this need should be looked at in closer detail. However, offering it poses a major challenge for most of the organizations interviewed, due to legal ramifications that they are not willing to take on. Furthermore, it is not clear as to whether foundations would be amenable to accepting the larger volume of applications that such sponsorship would encourage.
- Most importantly, a dance service organization must be adequately resourced and staffed. The major reason why the Dance Coalition failed was its ongoing financial shortfall. It must be run by a qualified leader who is able to serve as a knowledgeable advocate for the dance field overall, and who is paid a salary that is truly commensurate with their expertise level. For these reasons, funders who truly wish to support dance services are encouraged to seriously consider multi-year commitments.

Working with Existing Organizations. Throughout the planning process, questions arose as to whether existing organizations could expand their services to address the needs of dance. Now that initial research has been gathered, these organizations should be explored in more depth about the possibility of either starting a dance program or housing a dedicated staff person for dance. Candidates that seem to offer the most potential are the Arts and Business Council, the League of Chicago Theaters, Links Hall and Dance/USA. They have sizeable office space, an existing infrastructure, and an income base that comes from fees for services and/or members. With all of these organizations, there are overlaps between what they offer and what is needed by the dance field. The League offers extensive audience development and promotion for its members and advocates on behalf of the theater community. In some ways, according to the League's staff, the ways of working in mid-sized theaters and small dance organizations are similar. One idea that is worthy of exploration is forming a collaboration between the League's extensive website and the new website for dance, which was recommended by the dance marketing study recently completed by Hubbard Street and its partner, Carol Fox Associates. The Arts and Business Council addresses many of the administrative needs of nonprofit organizations. However, both organizations offer far fewer services to small organizations and independent artists. Dance/USA has opened regional organizations in New York and Washington, DC.

Finally, in making decisions about dance service provision, the challenge will be to focus on a few select services. The array of what is found in New York cannot be offered by one

organization. Therefore, priorities will need to be set, and choices made, about what would be most helpful and what can be provided.

8. Consultant Talking Points

Introduction

This Final Report has provided a wealth of information about dance artists and service provision. It has examined the services that are both available and desired in Chicago, surveyed what is offered in other cities, and explained what works well in New York, as model of service provision. The process has been strengthened by the involvement of the Dance Advisory Committee, which includes leaders with a wide range of experience and perspectives in management, choreography, performance, touring, presenting, teaching, funding, and services; its members are connected to the national dance community and understand the overall ecology of the field. Another major strength of this process is that it's been directed by artists who understand and live with the very needs that are to be addressed by service provision. The project directors' ideas about the study's design, and their imperative to challenge existing assumptions about artist' needs and capacity, was a major reason for the insight that came from the Comparative Document and artist focus groups.

At the onset of this planning process, the following questions were stated. These questions were to be answered by the project directors, steering committee, and Advisory, in conjunction with the consultant, based on their review of this Final Report.

- *Is there enough interest and support to embark on service provision? Is the community, including the Advisory, committed to embarking on the task of beginning some kind of a Dance Services Entity?*²⁶
- *What would programming consist of? What services are available in Chicago? What would a DSE would offer that is not already being provided?*
- *Who will run it? Who will staff it? What leadership qualities are required? What staff size is required? How might it be governed?*
- *Where will it be housed? Will it be located within an existing organization, as a project, or as a new organization? Will it have its own 501(c)3?*
- *Who will support it? What might an anticipated mix be of earned and contributed income?*

These Talking Points are geared toward answering the above questions. *They express the viewpoints of the consultant about next steps, and are not meant to be interpreted as the opinions of the majority of the Advisory or of the project directors.* As of the time of this writing, consensus had not yet been reached about next steps.

There is ample evidence that the needs of the majority of artists in the Chicago dance community are not being comprehensively addressed and that some form of dance service provision would fill a significant gap. Regardless of its structure, the DSE should:

- Listen closely to the real needs of artists, and creatively solve the problem of addressing those needs through service provision.

²⁶ For simplicity's sake, within this section, the term Dance Services Entity (DSE) will be used to refer to this mechanism, whether it exists as a new organization, or a project within an existing organization.

- Take advantage of existing resources, including other organizations, ideas that can be replicated from other cities, as well as technological advances that allow for sharing information.
- Exist in as lean and affordable structure as possible, without compromising on the quality and experience of staff.
- Exhibit leadership and vision in program design and communication.
- Remain flexible, so that it can respond to artists' needs and grow accordingly.

The talking points are presented in eight areas.

1. Collaborations with Local Arts Organizations

Associations with leading arts service providers in Chicago should be explored. Taking advantage of mutually beneficial collaborations, when possible and suitable to the dance field, will economize on resources and avoid duplication of services. The research contained in the Comparative Document has shown a wide range of services that are offered to Chicago's artists. In some instances, services are provided by multiple organizations. Yet the focus groups showed the weaknesses of the current service rubric in meeting artist needs, largely because these artists are not able to access existing services, due to lack of staff and time. Nevertheless, the city can boast of several outstanding service providers, which fulfill important roles, from legal incorporation to board development and marketing to audience development. It is important to begin by exploring these organizations and their service provision in more depth, in order to determine how they could benefit dance.

2. Housing of Dance Services Entity

Serious consideration should be given to housing the DSE as a project within an existing organization. Options should be explored and a decision made about where to locate this project. Strong consideration should be given to the organization's openness to serve as a fiscal sponsor for artists. Housing the DSE within an existing 501(c)3 will save on overhead and accelerate the speed at which services can be offered. Specifically, it would save on costs such as accounting, rent, and possibly utilities and equipment. The most likely candidates are profiled in this report, but their interest level in housing a DSE has not been explored in detail, nor has the cost required of doing so. In addition, the need for fiscal sponsorship is so prevalent that it should be explored, and possibly linked to, the decision about what organization houses the DSE.

3. Hiring

It is critical that a qualified leader be hired to run and coordinate the DSE. Recruiting and hiring senior staff is an important decision and may make or break the effectiveness of the DSE. As evidenced in the presentations in March, the speakers from New York service organizations showed a high level of insight and understanding of how the dance community works and the ability to speak articulately for the field. Those who run organizations and make major decisions have worked tirelessly for decades (between 20 and 30 years) to understand the needs of the dance field, comprised largely of the "SMIDs" in their own city, and to develop and maintain services that respond to those needs. They are the veterans, the leaders, with senior level skills and experience, who have a perspective of a large proportion of the dance field, from

the emerging individual artist to the large company, from what is happening in NYC to the country as a whole, from the creative process to the capital campaign. The hire for staff in Chicago should be held to the same high standard, which should be reflected in the recruitment process, salary, job description, expectations for performance, and annual review. This position will be a challenge but also an opportunity for the right person.

4. Program Options

The research revealed a number of services that are of high priority to artists in Chicago. In forming a DSE they should be given serious consideration. Indeed, these same services are priorities for most cities that are now considering dance service provision. These recommendations do not provide detail about the service priorities, since 1) detailed research was not conducted in those areas, and 2) such decisions would be the responsibility of the hired staff and Advisory. Programs that might be undertaken are briefly outlined below, and the consultant makes suggestions about how to undertake them.

Information Sharing and Website Development. Having a website is key to sharing information, developing audiences, and advocating for the art form. Explore the overlaps in website goals and scope with DCA, Carol Fox and associates, and the League of Chicago Theaters. Research designers and costs, such as Cabanga, who did an excellent job on the Dance/NYC site [www.dancenyc.org]. Consider replicating much of what has been done on that site, since it addresses many of the same needs that were expressed by Chicago artists. Information areas would include audience development, through a searchable and up to date performance calendar; fundraising, including grant deadlines, applications and requirements; consultants, in management, and technical areas; and space for performance and rehearsals.

Advocacy on Behalf of the Dance Field. Aggressively meet with city officials and funders, to talk about the needs of the dance field, using the Advisory and its connections to open doors. Encourage the local dance field to become active and vocal in speaking to the need for the DSE. Consult with organizations such as the League of Chicago Theaters about advocacy. Develop a working group or task force to look at the issue of press coverage and explore the concerns about this issue in other cities; arrange for a meeting with editors of major papers about dance coverage. To encourage better writing, send writers to American Dance Festival's program on dance criticism; consider starting a website like DanceView Times, which allows dance writers who are not given adequate space in the print media to cover performances online; and encourage local arts writers, including choreographers, to develop stories about performances and submit them to the Reader and other local papers. Dance/NYC could be consulted and seen as a model for successful advocacy.

Fiscal Sponsorship. A high priority for artists, fiscal sponsorship has proven to be a successful model for securing support for New York artists. New York service organizations offer it successfully, and can be used as models for how to develop such a program for Chicago. Consult with organizations that offer this service, including DTW, Pentacle and the Field, but also NYFA, and Fractured Atlas. NYFA has been developing a guide to fiscal sponsorship that can be used by other cities and could serve as a resource. And, staff at the Jerome Foundation has developed a packet of information for funders to encourage them to consider allowing fiscal sponsorship of artists. Questions to address include: workload and

staff time involved; costs incurred and charged; and working with funders, including encouraging them to allow for fiscal sponsors.

Networking and Forums for Exchange Among Artists. This area was of high priority to many artists in the focus groups. Explore options for a regular meeting time and space for artists to gather and exchange information, referrals and ideas, and generally get to know one another. New York has had success at hosting happy hours for this purpose.

Creative and Professional Development. Explore options that would complement what is being offered by other organizations, but provide new opportunities for dance artists. Consider setting up a mentorship program with senior level administrators, as well as a program with area universities, which could provide interns or students to work with artists.

Fiscal Administration, Booking and Management. Explore offering one-on-one assistance in these areas for artists who are willing to pay a fee for it. Again, New York organizations can be used as a model.

Health Care and Insurance. Explore any options for reduced cost health care and insurance for artists. New York has identified and worked with a clinic that is willing to offer reduced costs for artists. Several on the Advisory thought that similar options might exist in Chicago. Any such information and assistance would be appreciated by artists; health care was a top concern for them in the focus groups.

National Visibility and Connections. To help with national visibility, consider forming an ad-hoc national committee of friends who have been interested and helpful to Chicago's efforts, such as Steve Gross, Cathy Edwards, Cary Baker, Christine Kite, Bob Yesselman, Ivan Sygoda, Dance/USA staff and/or Suzanne Callahan. Share the information from this report with those in other cities who are exploring dance service provision, including Philadelphia, Washington, DC and Minneapolis.

5. Budget

A multi-year budget that will cover baseline costs for staff and overhead should be developed. The budget should be able to expand to include specific projects and service priorities. Research showed that dance service organizations have had difficulty surviving on their own in cities outside of New York primarily because of the lack of income, both contributed and earned. Most organizations in New York provide services for a budget of \$300,000 to \$400,000, excluding fiscal sponsorship, and their staff salaries are about \$170,000. They exist from about half or more contributed income and half to one-third earned income (with the exception of Dance/NYC). Most organizations do not draw substantial income from their membership dues (DTW draws 15% and the Field draws 10%). And, those that do charge membership fees offer an incentive to artists in the form of services that are crucial to managing, fundraising and performing their work (such as discounted ad rates, fiscal sponsorship, etc.).

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Advisory will play a role in the success of the DSE and should agree to take some responsibility for its function. In addition, the dance community overall must be involved in planning and running a DSE, and their input should be welcome. The artists who attended the focus groups were extremely interested in services and will probably be willing to help. Advisory members can be an enormous asset to, and influence on, this process. They should commit to an agreed-upon set of responsibilities, understanding that more volunteer time will be required in the first year. The role for artists and/or Advisory members may include some or all of the following:

- Serve on a committee to complete one of the tasks in these recommendations.
- Help out with one or more services areas per year. This may mean assisting with the website design; working on a plan for advocacy; reviewing information about health care; etc.
- Advocate on behalf of the dance community by speaking in settings with business leaders, funders, and the press as well as in national settings.
- Mentor one younger artist or administrator per year.
- Contribute information to the website, including resources, articles, and tools.
- Donate money and resources to the organization, such as free office and meeting space, staff time, support for mailings, and other resources.
- Speak on behalf of the dance community in local and national settings.

7. Fundraising

It will be critical for the DSE to secure contributed support. The Advisory and the local community should advocate for the importance of funding for the DSE. The research has shown that a major reason for the failure of dance service organizations has been lack of resources. This shortcoming was the major reason why the Chicago Dance Coalition failed and this finding was supported by comments by NEA staff, national studies, recent research by Dance/USA, as well as the consultant's own experience (in running the Services to the Dance Field funding program for the NEA in the 1990s). The information in this report provides both quantitative and qualitative evidence of the needs for a DSE and justification for its cost and potential impact. In particular, the budgets of the New York service organizations and their reliance on foundation and government funding, can support the case for funding in Chicago. And, the budgets of New York service providers provide documentation of how much support has been given to dance services. It will be necessary to prepare a case statement, with a timeline and plan of action; much of that can be taken from this Report. In raising funds, it would be very helpful to obtain the buy-in on the part of the local community, through letters of support or other such endorsements.

Ideas for Case Statement:

1. The dance community and Advisory has just completed a major planning process, which is documented in this Report. The findings cover the current issues that SMIDs face, and the recommendations are supported by the Advisory, which includes major dance leadership throughout the city of Chicago.
2. The need for a DSE is documented by findings of this study, and supported by statistics in the Chicago Dance Mapping Project.

3. A DSE will assist funders in understanding the field; it would provide an educated liaison, in the form of staff, which could communicate with artists about funders, and vice versa.
4. The reach of the DSE is broad. Services are designed to meet the needs of a wide range of the dance field, including SMIDs, and may eventually focus on the needs of the 90% of artists that make up the Chicago community. Therefore, funders would be getting a big “bank for their buck.”
5. Other cities with large dance communities provide support for dance services, including administrative costs. The success of having DSEs has been shown, in cities such as New York.
6. The lack of dance service organizations in major dance centers (Philadelphia, Washington, DC and Minneapolis) has caused problems such that they are now also looking at forming their own DSEs. A national meeting just took place in Washington, DC to address this problem.
7. A DSE would serve a vital role in advocacy, with municipal leaders, press, and beyond.
8. A DSE would provide an important hub and identity for the field. It would serve as a liaison and coordinator among dance leadership in the city.
9. A DSE can respond to and address specific issues and come up with solutions. It can problem solve for the community as whole.
10. A DSE is economical. In providing consolidated services such as a website, audience development, and fundraising information, it would save time and administrative energy for a large number of artists.
11. A DSE would build national connections for Chicago’s dance community and eventually could encourage touring and other support.
12. CCT has played a major role through its Dance Initiative, but their support for dance cannot continue at the same level.

8. Timeline

A timeline of three years is recommended to transition to a DSE. The timeline would allow for a transition to paid staff, which would be supported by the Advisory. The timeline must take into account that up until this time the Dance Initiative has been largely supported by the pro bono and financial support of the Trust, an independent consultant who lives elsewhere, and the volunteer time of the Advisory.

Year 1. Transition Year

- Agree to roles and responsibilities
- Finalize timeline and budget
- Conduct additional research about coordination with other organizations
- Conduct research on housing of organization
- Recruit and hire senior staff
- Fundraising to secure commitment of funders to consider a multi-year grant request.
- Submit proposals, with narrative, plan, budget and timeline
- New senior staff opens office and hires support staff.

Years 2 and 3. DSE is Open and Running

- Budget expands
- Existence of DSE formally announced.
- Program priorities are developed and implemented
- Website developed and launched.
- Advisory expands and transitions to advisory body for DSE.

Conclusion

These steps outlined in this chapter should position Chicago to create a Dance Services Entity, which could have a tremendous impact on the dance field in the city. Moving forward would help the Chicago Community Trust and the Advisory Committee capitalize on the enormous investment they have made in the Dance Initiative over the past four years. Committing to funding and hiring qualified staff will save time and money over long run and help ensure the success of the DSE.

The consultant would like to acknowledge the talents and insight of the three project directors, who led this process: Ginger Farley, Julia Rhoads, and Eduardo Vilaro. In addition, the Advisory has played a critical role and has been a model of collaboration; the spirit of sincerity around the table has been heartening. The artists and staff of local services organizations interviewed for this study are thoughtful and energetic, and will be a major asset in moving forward. Finally, the leadership and commitment of the Chicago Community Trust has been exceptional. It has been a pleasure to work with Chicago's dance leaders and artists.

An extensive version of these talking points, with details on next steps and a budget, is available under separate cover.

Appendix A. Steering Committee Members

- 1. Ginger Farley, Co-Director**
The 58 Group
- 2. Julia Rhoads, Co-Director**
Lucky Plush Productions
- 3. Eduardo Vilaro, Co-Director**
Luna Negra Dance Theater
- 4. Gail Kalver**
Hubbard Street Dance Chicago
- 5. Laura Samson**
Executive Director, Alphawood Foundation
- 6. Hope Cooper**
Program Officer, Mayer and Morris Family Foundation

Appendix B. Advisory Members Who Attended Retreat in May 2004

1. Karen Mensch, Chicago Community Trust
2. Brenda Hull, Chicago Community Trust
3. Sarah Solotaroff, Chicago Community Trust
4. Bonnie Brooks, Dance Center of Columbia College
5. Phyllis Brzowska, Luna Negra Dance Theater
6. Asimina Chremos, Links Hall
7. Ginger Farley, Independent Artist
8. Joan Grey, Muntu Dance Theatre
9. Gail Kalver, Hubbard Street Dance Company
10. Anna Paskevaska, Chicago Academy of the Arts
11. Julia Rhoads, Lucky Plush Productions
12. John Schmidt, Dance Chicago
13. Fred Solari, Dance Chicago
14. Peter Taub, Museum of Contemporary Art
15. Jon Teeuwissen, Joffrey Ballet of Chicago
16. Eduardo Vilaro, Luna Negra Dance Theater
17. Andrea Snyder, Dance/USA (guest)
18. Suzanne Callahan, facilitator
19. Bethany Betzler, documenter

Appendix C.**Comparative Document of Services Available to Artists****Arranged According to Type of Service****Compiled with the Assistance of Jennifer Zahn**

Service Type	Organization Name	How Service Is Offered	Eligibility: Types of Organizations & Disciplines Served	Service Level*
Advocacy	League of Chicago Theatres	Advocating and promoting the Chicago theater industry (and other performing arts groups who are members - including dance companies) with City departments and planners, and state and city tourism agencies.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated and may be theater or other performing arts group - including dance companies! Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	O
	Sacred Dance Guild	Media & Community Awareness: SDG develops awareness about and promotes sacred dance in the media and the greater dance community.	Open to all interested	O
Audience Development	Arts & Business Council of Chicago	Arts Marketing Program: Provides targeted marketing initiatives, such as e-coaching and market research consulting, to enhance and diversity audience development efforts in the arts.	Open to all	S
	Arts & Business Council of Chicago	Case studies: helps artists determine what kind of service they may need.	Open to all	S
	League of Chicago Theatres	Hot Tix: Half-price tickets for member theaters and performing arts groups, and full-price tickets for non-members.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated; Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	O
	Various groups – see right	See also Communication & Mktg section for other groups offering Audience Development services: African American Arts Alliance, Chicago Dance & Music Alliance, Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, International Latino Cultural Center, Links Hall, Puerto Rican Arts Alliance, Sacred Dance Guild.	Varies; see individual organization descriptions and eligibility under Communication & Mktg section	O, OC, OS
Board Development	Arts & Business Council of Chicago	On Board: Recruits, trains and places business executives on the boards of nonprofit arts organizations. Application process required. Targeted more to established organizations, not necessarily individual artists looking to develop an organization.	501(c)3 status for 5 years; org must have regular board meetings & a set yearly agenda	OC

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Board Development (cont'd)	CPAs for the Public Interest	Board Service Program: Facilitates the placement of CPAs and other financial professionals on nonprofit boards. CPAsPI does NOT pre-qualify any volunteers. Artistic org is responsible for screening for qualifications and suitability to your organization.	Charitable nonprofit orgs, any size; application process	C
	Lawyers for the Creative Arts	Board recruiting: LCA sends out letters to lawyers when board member requests come in.	None	OC
Business Structure Advising	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Health insurance referrals; liability insurance referrals (latter for org members only).	Membership (indiv or org)	C
	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Cultural Planning: DCA offers assistance in getting permits, using the space, legal requirements, etc, acting as a liaison with City.	Chicago based arts organization or individual artists	OC
	Lawyers for the Creative Arts	Assistance with general business organization: tax exemption, pros & cons of incorporation.	Indiv: <\$30K gross household inc; NP org: <\$250K; applic	OS
Communication & Mktg	African American Arts Alliance	Convergence: a publication highlighting the works of AAAA membership; Flashback: providing timely news to members.	Connection to African American artistic discipline	O
	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Monthly newsletter containing news and information on professional and funding opportunities. Classifieds.	Membership (indiv or org)	O
	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Public information services through website and telephone hotline announcements. Performance Guide, Teaching Directory, Membership Directory (photo capable), and Dance Mapping Data online. Advocacy updates and News also online.	Membership (indiv or org)	O
	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Arts Flash: Main communication vehicle, a newsletter announcing different groups' promotional campaigns to the arts community. Theme-based: Blues Weekend, Jazz, Dance, Winter Delights. Chicago Artist Month is in fall. Dance companies may promote their programs.	Chicago based arts organization or individual artists	O
	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Promotion, Online and Otherwise: Any company may send in press releases to the Office of Tourism to announce programs & opportunities. Online calendar announces events of dance and other arts groups with events taking place in the center. To better market Chicago, Office of Tourism features a dance company on their web site and in written materials. Dance companies may be linked to their web site - see Dance section on page called Exploring Chicago.	Chicago based arts organization or individual artists	O
	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Brochure Center: Maintained at Cultural Center and at Water Tower. Any dance company may send in their brochure.	Chicago based arts organization or individual artists	OC

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Communication & Mktg (cont'd)	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Spotlight on Chicago: Two arts resource fairs geared to a) Arts Educators and b) Hospitality, Tourism, and Media organizations. Arts organizations are invited to showcase what they're doing.	Chicago based arts organization or individual artists	OC
	International Latino Cultural Center	Calendar of events, segmented by discipline.	Connection to Latino art & culture	O
	League of Chicago Theatres	Streets to the Seats marketing initiative. In 2003, included Theater Fever: Highlights member theaters and performing arts groups - including member dance companies - and entices new audiences with free workshops and discounted tickets; a public service announcement campaign, door hangers, and a postcard referral program.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated and may be theater or other performing arts group - including dance companies! Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	OS
	League of Chicago Theatres	chicagoplays.com: Centralized information on theater and performing arts groups - including dance groups. Contains a shows and benefits database, the city's only comprehensive opening night calendar, links to member theaters' and performing arts groups' home pages, and opportunities (auditions, jobs). Website includes some dance and could be expanded to include more.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated and may be theater or other performing arts group - including dance companies! Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	OS
	League of Chicago Theatres	State Street Thanksgiving Day Parade: In conjunction with the Chicago Festival Association and WLS-TV ABC 7, the League produces three to six two-minute theatre segments in the Parade. Strong on-screen identity for shows selected, as parade is broadcast to 90 million+ households.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated and may be theater or other performing arts group - including dance companies! Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	OS
	League of Chicago Theatres	Chicagoplays theater program book serves over 75 area theaters/performing arts groups - including dance companies. Show information, articles with specific Chicago theaters focus, and a member theater/performing arts directory.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated; Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	O

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Communication & Mktg (cont'd)	League of Chicago Theatres	Chicago Theater Guide: Comprehensive profiles of member theaters and performing arts groups - like dance companies - including show times, prices, parking & accessibility information, box office numbers, addresses & maps.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated; Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	O
	League of Chicago Theatres	Play Money gift certificates to theater and performing arts groups - like dance companies - redeemable at ~75 participating theaters and Hot Tix locations.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated; Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	O
	League of Chicago Theatres	Theater Dollars program: Offers \$5 off coupons for your show. For all members: theaters and other performing arts groups - like dance companies, etc.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated and may be theater or other performing arts group - including dance companies! Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	O
	Links Hall	E-weekly: Highlights what's coming up at Links plus 3-5 other things happening in the city (lectures, workshops, etc). About 900 on e-list. Items are included in the e-weekly only once; general policy is to ask performers to pick which week they're listed.	No requirements	OC
	Puerto Rican Arts Alliance	Dissemination of information related to Puerto Rican arts & culture through web site events calendar ("under construction").	Connection to Puerto Rican art & culture	O
	Sacred Dance Guild	Egroup and web site serve as forum for publicizing sacred dance events and news. Approximately 300 members in Yahoo egroup GodDance.	Open to all interested	OC
Data Gathering	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	2004 Dance Survey project online. Answers to survey "will help build the statistical database we need to provide up-to-date research you can browse from [the CDMA web] page."	None	O
Financial Svcs	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Credit union membership through Credit Union 1.	Individual membership	O
	CPAs for the Public Interest	Accounting Consultation Program: Pro bono volunteers assist in setting up accounting systems and developing budget reports, teaching tax and reporting requirements to nonprofit staff and board members, and addressing other financial management challenges. Volunteer time limited to 30 hours. Focus is on training/coaching.	501(c)(3) status and budget \$350K or under; application process	C

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Financial Svcs (cont'd)	Nonprofit Financial Center	Accounting & Advisory Services: Core accounting services, audit preparation, accounting software set-up and installation, NFC Financial Check-up, crisis management, financial policies & procedures, budgeting & forecasting, cost allocation, funder reporting requirements, other management services (growth advice, staff structuring, staff training). Professional Associate Access gains you the professional services of a financial expert for one-half to one-full day a week.	Nonprofit status	OC
	Nonprofit Financial Center	NFC Signature Training: Financial management institutes, seminars, and bootcamps, and custom on-site training programs. Develops skills of nonprofit staff, board members, and those seeking entry into the nonprofit sector.	Nonprofit status	OC
	Nonprofit Financial Center	NFC Financing: Working capital credit programs to help organizations maintain a stable cash flow and plan for programmatic development. Short-term emergency loans, working capital loans, ODI/Tech loans.	Nonprofit status in IL	C
	Nonprofit Financial Center	Scholarships: Available to help cover the cost of NFC Signature Training.	Nonprofit status, budget under \$750K, application process	C
Fund Raising & Grant Writing	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Funding applications and information, and touring information; dance and music publications, professional staff available for referrals.	Membership (indiv or org)	CS
	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Four grants programs offered: Cultural Grants Division awards more than \$1 million each year to Chicago artists and arts organizations through a competitive, peer review process, funding arts activities that reach out to people in every Chicago community. The COMMUNITY ARTS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAAP) provides support to new and emerging artists and arts organization projects that address needs in the area of professional, organizational, and artistic development. CITYARTS PROGRAM is a triennial grant program designed to assist the nonprofit arts and cultural community in the city of Chicago through general operating support. NEIGHBORHOOD ARTS PROGRAM (NAP) supports artists who present high-quality instructional arts programs benefiting youth, senior citizens, and people with disabilities in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods. CULTURAL OUTREACH PROGRAM supports nonprofit delegate agencies that offer cultural programming in low- to moderate-income communities.	Chicago based arts organization or individual artists	OS
	Donors Forum of Chicago	Donors Forum Library: Houses Midwest's largest collection of resources on philanthropy, nonprofit management & fundraising, which includes access to grant and foundation databases (Dbs also available by subscription). Staff	Depends: some members-only benefits; others open. Orgs must have nonprofit status. Members & nonmembers may	CS

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		performs research only for members, associate members, and forum partners.	use library.	
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Fund Raising & Grant Writing (cont'd)	Donors Forum of Chicago	Workshops, group training & off-site training: ABCs of proposal writing, individual giving, or capital campaigns. Building relationships with corporations, foundations, or major donors. Evaluation reports. Identifying and training board leaders and more. Donors Forum related programs may be tailored to your group's needs. Workshops are taught by instructor or panel, with about 20 attending. Programming is geared differently for Members (grantmakers) versus Forum Partners (orgs).	Workshops open to members and non-members. DFC members receive 20% discount on workshops. Member = grantmakers, Forum Partner = nonprofit organization. Most services are geared toward organizations. Serving about 1200 nonprofits, 60% from the Chicago area (6 metro county area), 13% of 1200 are arts, culture & humanities orgs, 55% have budgets far less than \$1M. See web site for member/partner list.	C
	Donors Forum of Chicago	Grantseekers Toolbox: Step-by-step process for seeking funds. Topics include corporate sponsorships, in-kind gifts, special event fundraising. Online learning modules.	None, but add'l services w mbsp. Orgs must have nonprofit status.	S
Legal Svcs	Lawyers for the Creative Arts	Assistance with copyright, trademark, and other intellectual property matters, general business, contracts, landlord/tenant matters, immigration, employment, taxes, and other areas. Assistance with disputes over payment and other issues. LCA does NOT provide service for criminal, divorce, domestic relations, personal injury, or emergency matters.	Indiv: <\$30K gross household inc; NP org: <\$250K; applic	C
	Lawyers for the Creative Arts	Expanded Referrals: Will help locate an attorney who will handle a matter for those who do not qualify for pro bono services.	Open for those not qualifying for pro bono work	C
	Lawyers for the Creative Arts	Arts Mediation Service: Private mediation of disputes within the arts community.	Indiv: <\$30K gross household inc; NP org: <\$250K; applic	C
Library & Resource Ctr Svcs	Arts & Business Council of Chicago	Books, brochures, and reports	Open to all	S
	CPAs for the Public Interest	Provides just-in-time financial management information to nonprofit staff and board members through free resources and publications. Several are available in PDF format. Sample publications: Tax and Reporting Guide, Make Every Dollar Count: Simple Cash Management for Nonprofit Organizations, The Audit Process.	Charitable nonprofit orgs (or anyone with web access)	S
	CPAs for the Public Interest	Provides online lists of government agencies and nonprofit service organizations in IL; Hot Topics section as well. Topic samples: Board Member's Financial Responsibilities, Government Agencies/Forms, Starting a Nonprofit.	Charitable nonprofit orgs (or anyone with web access)	S

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Library & Resource Ctr Svcs (cont'd)	Donors Forum of Chicago	Publications: Giving in Illinois 2003, In Perspective (survey of nonprofits), How Effective Nonprofits Work, Illinois Nonprofits: Profile of Charities, Advocacy Organizations.	None	S
	Donors Forum of Chicago	Philanthropy Centers in West, Northwest and South suburbs.	None: members and non-members may use library	S
	Donors Forum of Chicago	Research & Trends: Huge amount of information online on charitable giving, philanthropy trends, nonprofits and the economy, public policy research, annual reports, and research on nonprofits.	Depends: some members-only benefits; others open. Orgs must have nonprofit status. Members & nonmembers may use library. Most services are structured around organizations	S
	League of Chicago Theatres	Resource & service provider links to arts & governmental organizations and other professional resources.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated and may be theater or other performing arts group - including dance companies! Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	O
	Nonprofit Financial Center	Publications and tools available on-site and online. Sample publications: Starting a Nonprofit in Illinois: Do it Right the First Time, other handbooks. Online tools: NFC Financial Analyzer, FAQ, Notable\$ newsletter. Computer lab. Library contains over 500 volumes specializing in nonprofit-specific material and demo packages of popular nonprofit-specific accounting software.	Nonprofit status	S
Networking & Social Events	African American Arts Alliance	Black Excellence Awards: Honoring local and national artists and arts technicians for outstanding achievement. Lifetime Achievement Award, presented to an individual who through his/her life work, has made significant contribution to the promotion, promulgation, and development of Black art & culture.	Connection to African American artistic discipline	O
	Arts & Business Council of Chicago	Annual Awards ("THE ABBYs"): Recognizes management excellence, leadership, volunteerism, and outstanding arts/business partnerships.	Open to all	O

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Networking & Social Events (cont'd)	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Chicago Dance Awards (formerly Ruth Page Awards) in Dance Achievement (\$5,000 to a not-for-profit org), Outstanding Contribution, and Lifetime Service to the Field. Anyone may submit nominations; annual presentation, though not all categories may be awarded each year. Awards given at sole discretion of the Chicago Dance Awards Nominating Review Committee and CDMA Board of Directors. Nomination forms online (out of date) due July 1 for excellence in performances taking place between July 1 and June 30 of the previous year.	None	OS
	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Membership meetings reviewing community needs.	Membership (indiv or org)	OS
	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Cultural Network: An informal consortium of local cultural organizations that shares resource information and promotes collaborative programming every six weeks over the lunch hour.	Chicago based arts organization or individual artists	O
	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Creative Conversations: A new discussion group for emerging arts leaders, developed with Americans for the Arts. Art leaders talk to a small group of emerging arts leaders.	Chicago based arts organization or individual artists	OS
	Donors Forum of Chicago	Dialogue with Donors, Annual Luncheon: combined programming for both DFC members and Forum Partners (most other programming is specifically targeted to either DFC Members (grantmakers) or Forum Partners (orgs), not both groups at the same time.	DFC Member or Forum Partner. Orgs must have nonprofit status	O
	League of Chicago Theatres	Theatre Dish: A quarterly community discussion and networking event for the entire Chicago theater community. Each event changes location, features a speaker or panel, and takes on a different issue pertaining to theatre in Chicago.	Free to anyone in the theatre community.	OS
	League of Chicago Theatres	Annual holiday party: Artists, staff, and board members come together to celebrate successes and brainstorm current issues and initiatives.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated and may be theater or other performing arts group - including dance companies! Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	O
	Sacred Dance Guild	Member-only video viewings.	Open to all interested	OC

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Production Svcs	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Gallery 37: Dance studio available for rehearsals & workshops. Storefront Theater may also be used for dance - no rental fees, but up to 15% of box office receipts are kept by venue. Also, ticket prices must be kept to \$15 or less, and master classes must be offered for Gallery 37 apprentice artists. Storefront accepts proposals through Sept 15 for consideration in the coming season's programming. For more information, go to http://www.storefronttheater.org/cgi-bin/storefront/sf2_proposals.cgi .	Chicago based arts organization or individual artists	OC
	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Rentals of DCA Venues: DCA offers nonprofit rentals of meeting halls and classrooms, etc., for fundraisers and meetings, etc.	Chicago based arts organization or individual artists	O
	Links Hall	Link-Up residency program: Annual selection of 3 young performers/choreographers for 6 month residency that supports in-depth creative process. Performers receive rehearsal space 10 hrs/week, free admission to workshops and performances, informal show opportunities, a fully produced public performance of their work at cycle end. In return, performers assist Links Hall w/ studio upkeep and general services (marketing, e.g.).	No requirements	OCS
	Links Hall	Creative Time: Subsidized rental space. This is the heart of Links Hall. Some one-time and some ongoing rentals. Space is available 24 hours a day.	No requirements	
	Links Hall	Linkages: A performance opportunity, sometimes described as a co-production or co-presentation. Artists receive Friday/Saturday/Sunday night performances; full use of light and sound equipment; dressing room, storage space; 10 hours of tech rehearsal w full box office services; marketing support, including inclusion in program as a Links event.	No requirements	C
	Music and Dance Theater Chicago, Inc.	Discounted daily usage fees and costs of stagehand labor for 1,525 capacity theater.	501(c)3 status	O
Professional Development	African American Arts Alliance	Workshops & seminars on topical issues.	Connection to African American artistic discipline	O
	Arts & Business Council of Chicago	Arts/Business Forums: A thought provoking series of public forums where culture and commerce intersect on a wide range of topics.	Open to all	S
	Arts & Business Council of Chicago	Annual Workshop Series: Business Essentials for the Arts – an educational series for arts professionals and their boards on critical management topics.	Open to all (for a fee)	S

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Professional Development (cont'd)	Arts & Business Council of Chicago	Arts Client Assessment: ABC conducts three one-hour managerial assessments on the 4th Monday of every month. Application, assessment, BVA request, initial match meeting, continuing meetings, exit meeting. Results shared only with arts client. Other steps may follow (BVA, etc.). Targeted more to established organizations, not necessarily individual artists looking to develop an organization.	501(c)3 status for 3 years	C
	Arts & Business Council of Chicago	smARTscope Assessment: A strategic assessment tool offered to small and mid-sized arts groups of all disciplines. The arts group's key internal staff and board members assess their organizational performance on seven managerial areas: concept development & planning, staffing & structure, board governance, income generation, financial management, marketing & audience development, and facilities. Results are tabulated and analyzed, often in conjunction with an independent arts consultant selected especially for the arts group. An initial "discrepancies" meeting occurs to address data oddities, then presentation is made to invited arts staff, ensemble, and board. Targeted more to established organizations, not necessarily individual artists looking to develop an organization.	501c3 status for 3 years	CS
	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Workshops exploring important dance/music community issues.	Membership (indiv or org)	O
	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Career development information: resume review, counseling on job hunting strategies, more.	Individual membership	CS
	CPAs for the Public Interest	Workshops: Trains nonprofit staff and board members on financial management of nonprofits throughout the year.	Charitable nonprofit organizations of any size	O
	League of Chicago Theatres	CommUnity Conference: Annual, industry-wide, two-day Chicago theater community event, focusing on discussion and seminars.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated and may be theater or other performing arts group - including dance companies! Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	OC
	Sacred Dance Guild	Workshops and opportunities to share sacred dances with each other in a supportive environment.	Open to all interested	OCS

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Programming Svcs	African American Arts Alliance	Black Arts Month: Showcases, panel discussions, youth programs and more. Juneteenth Film Festival.	Connection to African American artistic discipline	O
	Black Ensemble Theater	5-play season; community access program, providing free/discounted tickets to 45+ social service and nonprofit organizations that serve populations that might not otherwise have access to theater. New Directions: Uses theater, music & writing to help 45 wards of the state transition from state-chaperoned children to living in group or foster homes, and on to independent adults. Plays with a Purpose: 5 musical plays presented on Chicago's southside, addressing issues related to the classroom environment. Strengthening the Schools through Theater Arts: Uses dramatic arts to increase students' learning & personal skills.	Connection to African American arts	O
	Chicago Dept of Cultural Affairs	Presenting & Booking: DCA books & presents dance companies year round in the Cultural Center and other venues (e.g Millennium Park). Dance related programming includes the Free June-July-August Chicago SummerDance series at Grant Park. Dance lessons, live music & dancing.	Chicago based organization	OC
	International Latino Cultural Center	Chicago Latino Film Festival; co-production of events in other artistic disciplines.	Connection to Latino art & culture	OC
	Puerto Rican Arts Alliance	Cuatro and guitar music lessons; exhibits; Puerto Rican Cuatro Festival; Three Kings Festival.	Connection to Puerto Rican art & culture	O
Purchasing Group Svcs	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Cooperative advertising services with discounted rates for advertising on radio stations WBEZ-FM, WDCB-FM & WFMT-FM, and in the Chicago Reader, Chicago Tribune, Daily Herald, and Reader's Guide	Organizational membership	O
	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance	Discounts on concert tickets, recordings, and supplies.	Individual membership	O
	League of Chicago Theatres	Cooperative advertising program with Daily Herald, Chicago Reader, Sun Times, Tribune, WBEZ, Key Magazine, Metromix, New City, and Onion.	Member; Org must be legally incorporated and may be theater or other performing arts group - including dance companies! Must provide minimum of 24 Hot Tix/week/production (16 for venues <100 seats); Current with League dues & debts	O

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Volunteer Recruitment Svcs	Arts & Business Council of Chicago	Business Volunteers for the Arts: Recruits, develops and places experienced business professionals (usually a team of 2-3 people) on management projects. Trains and places teams of business professionals with arts groups on pro bono consulting projects. Project timelines vary from a few weeks to several months. Average volunteer time is 5-10 hours per month. Targeted more to established organizations, not necessarily individual artists looking to develop an organization.	501(c)3 status for 3 years; dedicated person to work with consultant	OC
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Appendix D. Recruitment Letter

Dear [Artist Name]:

As an artist who has been active in the Chicago community, we seek your ideas and advice as we plan for the future.

We are embarking on a study to learn more about the needs of dance artists who work either independently or in small and medium sized companies. As you know, there is a wealth of artists and talent in our city who have accomplished much, but who also face considerable challenges as they create and produce work. Funded by the Chicago Community Trust, the purpose of our study is to present a composite picture of the needs facing these artists and to provide a mechanism for response from the leadership of the dance field itself. The information will be shared with the dance community as well as funders.

Because you are an artist and know firsthand of the issues and needs that we face, we would like to invite you to attend one of four focus groups, which will take place at following times:

Sunday, September 26 from 6:00 to 8:00
Monday, September 27 from 12:00 to 2:00 and 6:00 to 8:00
Tuesday, September 28 from 12:00 to 2:00

Focus groups will take place at the home of Ginger Farley, at 155 West Burton Place, #2, in Chicago (her new home near the North Avenue El stop). Refreshments will be served and we will provide a \$50 honorarium to thank you for your time. You will be joined by other artists in a lively discussion. This information will be a critical part of our learning and we will benefit from your insight, experience, and ideas.

We have retained the services of Suzanne Callahan, of Callahan Consulting for the Arts, based in Washington DC, who is working with Jennifer Zahn, a Chicago-based consultant. Suzanne and the three artist/project directors listed below will be conducting the sessions. We would appreciate it if you could respond as soon as possible to Jennifer to either confirm your participation or send your regrets. Please indicate which focus group you can attend. Jennifer can be reached at [] or email at [].

Thank you for your interest at this exciting time. We look forward to learning from you in this vital dialogue. If you need further information or have any questions, please call Suzanne at 202-955-8325.

Sincerely,
Ginger Farley
The 58 Group

Julia Rhoads
Lucky Plush Productions

Eduardo Vilaro
Luna Negra Dance Theater

Appendix E. Artists Who Attended Focus Groups

Focus Group 1

Homer Bryant, Bryant Ballet of Chicago
Kevin Iega Jeff, Deeply Rooted Dance Theater
Pranita Jain, Kalapriya Dance
Shanti Kumari Johnson, Pilsen Ballet and Dance Company
Christopher Perricelli, Independent Artist

Focus Group 2

Gary Abbott, Deeply Rooted Dance Theater
Annie Arnoult Beserra, Striding Lion Interarts Workshop
Asimina Chremos, Independent Artist
Stephanie Clemens, MOMENTA
Sarah Ford, Ford Dance Ensemble
Altin Naska, Independent Artist
Rachel Thorne Germond, Independent Artist

Focus Group 3

Kristen Cox, Breakbone Dance Company
Randy Duncan, Independent Artist
Adriana Durant, Independent Artist
Jyl Fehrenkamp, Independent Artist
Jeff Hancock, Same Planet Different World Dance Theatre
Carrie Hanson, The Seldoms
Matthew Hollis, Independent Artist
Lin Shook, Perceptual Motion, Inc.
Katie Siafuku, Same Planet Different World Dance Theatre
Melissa Thodos, Melissa Thodos & Dancers

Focus Group 4

Jan Bartoszek, Hedwig Dances, Inc.
Wendy Clinard, Clinard Dance Theatre
Margi Cole, Dance COLEctive
Winifred Haun, Winifred Haun & Dancers
Atalee Judy, Breakbone Dance Company
Hema Rajagopalan, Natya Dance Theatre
Nana Shineflug, Chicago Moving Company
Raphaelle Ziemba, Instruments of Movement

In addition, one or more project directors were present at all focus groups.

Ginger Farley, The 58 Group
Julia Rhoads, Lucky Plush Productions
Eduardo Vilaro, Luna Negra Dance Theater

Independent Interviews

Shirley Mordine, Mordine & Company Dance Theater
Molly Shanahan, Mad Shak Dance Company
Additional information was provided independently by Molly Shanahan, Melissa Thodos and Michele Kranicke.

Appendix F. Two-Minute Survey

Where You Live

Zip code: _____

Number years working in dance in Chicago: _____

Do you live in the: City proper ___ or Suburbs ___ (which suburb?) _____

Gender: Male ___ Female ___

Are you: Single ___ Married or in a committed relationship ___

About Your Work and Performances

Please identify your dance form or style (such as modern, ballet, East Indian, or other description such as contact, performance art, etc.)

In the past two years I have (check all that apply):

been presented ___ self-produced ___ not performed ___ other ___ (please describe) _____

How You Work With Your Dancers and Other Folks

Do you work with dancers on an: Ongoing basis ___ or Project basis ___

Do you have paid administrative staff? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, are your administrative staff:

Part time employee(s) ___ Full time employee(s) ___ or Freelance ___

Are you able to pay yourself? Yes ___ No ___ Sometimes ___

Are you able to pay your dancers? Yes ___ No ___ Sometimes ___

I pay my dancers for (check all that apply):

Rehearsals: Some rehearsals ___ All rehearsals ___

Performances: Some performances ___ All performances ___

I pay my dancers through bartering (such as for rehearsal space): Yes ___ No ___

Please describe _____

Just A Little Basic Budget Information

Approximate annual budget size, including earned and contributed income.

___ Under \$25,000

___ \$25,000 to 50,000

___ \$50,000 to \$100,000

___ \$100,000 to \$200,000

___ \$200,000-\$300,000

___ Over \$300,000 (please give approximate amount): \$ _____

Check all that are usually a part of your budget on an annual basis.

___ Box office revenue

___ Individual donors

___ Foundations

___ Government agencies:

___ national ___ regional ___ state ___ city

___ Other arts-related earned income (such as teaching, bodywork, etc.)

___ Other non-arts-related jobs/projects to support my work

___ I am supported, in part, by the income of another person such as a spouse.

Please add any comments you have about this focus group or anything else on the back.

Thank you!

Appendix G. Artists' Zip Codes

60025	1
60202	3
60302	1
60523	1
60546	1
60601	1
60605	1
60606	1
60608	1
60610	2
60613	2
60616	2
60618	1
60622	5
60625	1
60626	1
60640	2
60641	1
60647	2
60651	1
60657	2
60660	1

Appendix H. Artists' Dance Forms

Artists self-identified their dance genres as follows:

	Contemporary	Multi-disc.	More than one dance form	Traditional
Avant garde dance theater, "Dance exile"	X	X	X	
Ballet, modern	X		X	
Classical ballet, ceremonial Mexican, modern, flamenco	X		X	
Contemporary	X			
Contemporary & historical modern dance	X		X	
Contemporary, modern, dance theater	X	X	X	
Dance & collaborative performance		X		
Dance, performance, sketch comedy		X		
East Indian				X
East Indian classical - Bharata Natyam				X
Improvisation, solo work, collaboration projects		X		
Modern	X			
Modern dance	X			
Modern, ballet	X		X	
Modern, ballet	X		X	
Modern, dance theater	X		X	
Modern, ethnic	X		X	
Modern, flamenco	X		X	
Modern, interdisciplinary	X	X		
Modern, interdisciplinary	X	X		
Modern, jazz, hip hop, moving [illegible] media	X	X	X	
Modern, jazz, hip hop, music productions (house, hip hop)	X	X	X	
Modern, performance work	X	X		
Modern, postmodern	X		X	
Modern, theatrical	X		X	
Not answered				
TOTALS	27	10	14	2

Therefore, 25 (74%) mentioned modern, and 27 (79%) mentioned modern forms.

Appendix I. Interview Script

Protocol [0:05-0:10]

- We are here today to talk about your impressions of the Chicago Dance Community, and the issues that arise in creating work and managing your careers. You are providing an important service by being here. We hope to use the information to better inform funders and the dance community about your issues and needs.
- You all have several characteristics in common: you are artists who are making work in Chicago. You are also what we have called “small, mid-sized or independent,” which means that your budget size and capacity are somewhat limited. That is to say you are not a major institution.
- There is an effort underway to look at the needs for service provision for dance artists in Chicago, mainly those artists whose support structures are limited. [Ask one of the three PDs to talk briefly about the study.]
 - The vast majority of artists are SMIDS, but they were not adequately represented when discussions were taking place.
 - We wanted to learn more about your needs and if/how they were being provided for.
 - We wanted to shape a response that could be shared with the Chicago Community Trust’s Advisory Committee, as well as the dance field in general.
 - We have compiled information about the services out there, and are talking to you about your experiences with them.
 - We will be taking the information to CCT and the Advisory and are looking at the possibility of forming a service organization, though no formal decisions have been made and funding is not available for it yet.
 - Your response today is an important part of the information we will take to the Trust.
- Focus groups are group interviews about a particular topic. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions we’ll ask. The right answer is whatever you have to say. Feel free to talk to each other, to agree and disagree. We are here to hear your impressions, whatever they may be.
- This is not a session to merely voice concerns at great length (i.e., complain) but rather to gather information in a constructive fashion for funders who want to learn something about how you do your work.
- Eduardo, Julia and Ginger are project directors, and are active artists who are creating work. They are here to listen and learn, but also to participate. They may choose to mostly listen, but will talk when there are issues about which they feel passionate.
- Primarily, we wish to know your own experiences and needs as artists. To the extent that you know, you can speak for the community overall. But it is important to please distinguish between comments you make for yourself and comments that you are making about the overall community. Say something like “I need...I would utilize that service...” and “The community needs...the community would utilize...”
- The information will be reported anonymously. It will be shared in the aggregate with others, but comments will not be attributed to any one person. We want you to feel free to be as candid as possible.
- [Obtain permission to tape.]
- Do you have any questions before we begin?

Hour 1: Introductions and Overall Impressions of Working in Chicago [0:10-0:30]

Introductions/Warm-up. [5 mins]

State your name, affiliation if you have one, and how long you have been making work in Chicago. Also, if relevant, tell us where and how long you made work prior to moving here.

Probes:

How many of you have a company? Size of company (small, mid-sized, large)?

Pick up or regular dancers? 501(c)3?

Overall Observations

We want to start by hearing your general impressions of working in Chicago in a number of areas.

Dance Community in General: Who makes up your community, as you define it? How does the dance community interact with each other? How does the community come up with solutions to its issues and problems (or not)?

Services for Dance: Are there service organizations? Are there organizations that act as service providers though their mission may be something else? For example, a presenter or dance company might provide a service to the overall community.

[Time permitting] Funding: We won't have time to discuss funding in detail. But if you could say one thing about funding, and your needs, what would it be?

Probes:

Projects versus general operating? Individual or companies? What is the relationship of the artists to the funders? What kinds of funding can you access in your community? How much contributed funding do you get?

[Time permitting] Space: What are the space situations in your community? Rehearsal space? Office and administrative spaces?

Need for Services [0:30 – 1:10, 40 minutes]

I am going to pass out a list of categories of services that might (or might not) be useful to you.

Please look at each category and tell us three things:

-Within each category, which services are most important to you as an artist? In other words, which would you yourself utilize the most?

-Which of them do you think would be most important to the overall community?

-What other critical services are not listed? We are not talking about services that “would be nice to have,” but those that are most important and would most benefit you and your work.

Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. Any response is fine.

Now that we've discussed these, which overall category above is most important to you? [Collect forms]

Uses of Services: Comparative Document [1:10-1:50, 40 minutes]

We are now handing out a short document that lists the names of organizations that offer services to the arts field in Chicago. We are also handing out a longer document that lists the services offered by those major organizations. As far as we can tell, dance is eligible to receive services from all of them. We'll give you a moment to familiarize yourself with the information.

Let's begin with the short document. Please tell us:

1. Which organizations on this list have you utilized for services?

We will have a more in-depth conversation about those services in a moment.

Let's look at the long list. We will go down the list, according to the type of service, and now we want to know what you think of the services you've received.

Can you please tell us four things:

4. Are you familiar with the organization?

5. Have you utilized THIS area of service listed from these organizations?

6. If you have, what did you think of those services?

7. If not, why have you not utilized them? It may be that you:

- did not know about the specific services listed here.
- face other limitations such as eligibility, your budget size, limits in staffing, time, etc.
- obtain this service in another way, such as from a family member or friend.
- feel that you don't need, cannot afford, or are not sure how to use these services.
- do not have any opinions about them.

Closing [1:50-2:00] time permitting

Final Thoughts: Of all that we've talked about, what services would you most like to have in the community?

Is there any area not covered by the questions that you would like to talk about or any comments you made that you would like to expand upon? [Pass out surveys, receipts, and checks.]

Appendix J. Service Organization Checklist

Arts Service Organizations in Chicago

Please check off the service organizations you have utilized. Return the form at the end of your session if it is not collected first.

<input type="checkbox"/>	African American Arts Alliance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Arts & Business Council of Chicago
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black Ensemble Theater
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chicago Cultural Center
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chicago Dance & Music Alliance
<input type="checkbox"/>	CPAs for the Public Interest
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donors Forum of Chicago
<input type="checkbox"/>	International Latino Cultural Center
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lawyers for the Creative Arts
<input type="checkbox"/>	Links Hall
<input type="checkbox"/>	League of Chicago Theatres
<input type="checkbox"/>	Music and Dance Theater Chicago, Inc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nonprofit Financial Center
<input type="checkbox"/>	Puerto Rican Arts Alliance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify):

Thanks for your feedback!

Appendix K. Services Desired By Artists

*Check off the services that you yourself would use.
Return this form at the end of the focus group.*

Communication

About performances: not only to encourage artists to see each other's work, but to contribute to public knowledge about the artists and art form.

About spaces: specific information for artists, regarding theater and rehearsal space rental and rates.

Collaborative marketing options, such as shared advertising, vendor discounts (for graphics, printers) or a media directory.

Half-price tickets: communication about and help to audiences in utilizing this service.

Developing a dance listserv to aid in promoting performances.

Press education, such as a symposium to train press to write about dance.

Audience development: an educational piece about dance for the general public.

Website and database management of information listed above.

Advocacy

About dance to the general public.

About artists and their needs, to funders, corporations, municipal agencies, etc.

For peer groups (such as dancers, artistic directors).

Networking

Electronic support group(s) for dance.

Establishing a resource bank of those with certain skill sets, and networking to match needs to resources (such as matching a choreographer with a lighting or costume designer, or arranging for bartering among artists).

Monthly roundtables of peers (in groups such as university staff, artistic directors, artists).

Establishing a meeting space for the dance community.

Professional Development

Access to health insurance and retirement plans.

Work-in-progress showings, so artists can get feedback on their work.

Mentorship and other one-on-one interaction among artists.

Monthly workshops/sessions on various topics for artists and administrators (including technique workshops but also administration).

Teacher training-discussion and training related to certification and mentorship in this area.

Administrative help (specifics not yet defined).

Board development.

Financial management.

Appendix L. Questions Asked at Service Organization Interviews

The questions below, in rough form, were suggested at our meeting in July.

Protocol: These interviews are part of a transition project that is being developed from the Dance Initiative at the Chicago Community Trust. We are trying to forge some new support systems for the dance field in order to strengthen the field. We are on a steering committee that is heading up this transition project. The interview is for our education; we want to better understand what is available and look at the possibilities of filling in the gaps in service provision. We also want to better understand any possibilities for those in our field to take advantage of what is offered through existing organizations.

1. What are your services? Is what's listed on our comparative document accurate? [Show them the Comparative Document]
2. What are eligibility requirements for your organization's services? Is there a minimum requirement for budget, nonprofit status, paid staff, etc.?
3. Who are services offered to? What is the range of types of artists and organizations, budget sizes, etc.? How many organizations do you serve?
4. Are benefits offered to one or numerous artistic disciplines? How many of the artists/organizations work in dance?
5. What is the geographical area of service?
6. Does your organization offer fiduciary support? Could it?
7. Does it offer group insurance? Could it?
8. Must those who receive services be members? Do you have membership?
9. Are services tailored to need of asker? If so, in what ways?
10. What is the best service you can offer to dance organizations of a budget size less than \$50,000?
11. How do you get the word out about your services? How aware do you think the dance field is of your services?
12. Are services offered as "one stop shopping"? Or, are there sustained relationships with artists?
13. We recently had focus groups with 35 artists who are independent or in small companies, who had this to say about your organization: [Review focus group comments about their organization]. What is your response? Is that accurate? Does this surprise you?
14. Is your organization in a position to add services for independent artists or small companies and, if so, in what areas?
15. Would your organization be willing to consider offering services to the dance field, beyond what you already offer?

Appendix M. **Comparison of Focus Group Participants to Mapping Project**

Though the number of participants in the focus groups was small, they appear to generally be representative of the data gathered through the Mapping Project in the following ways.

Similarities:

Nonprofit Status: In the Map, 68% of artists overall have non profit status, and 64% of the modern artists have nonprofit status. In the focus groups, 66% have nonprofit status, which is practically identical.

Budget Size: On the Map, it appears that almost 75% of the dance makers had a budget of under \$100,000, which was identical to the percentage of those from the focus groups. The Map shows a median budget for the modern dance artists of \$15,000. In this planning study, half of the artists were below the budget size of \$50,000, with a median of \$50,000-\$100,000.

Geographic Spread: The 80%-20% spread between the city (Cook County) and other counties in the area was exactly the same on the Map as it was in our groups.

Years in Operation: In the Map, the average founding year was 1992, or 12 years ago. In this study, the average founding year was 14 years ago. Median longevity was 1996, or eight years ago on the Map, as opposed to a median of 10 in our groups. Therefore, the number of years in operation was slightly higher in the study than the Map.

Paid Staff: 75% of those in the Map have no paid staff, as compared to 62% of our focus groups. This slight difference is presumably due to the inclusion of culturally specific and liturgical dance in the mapping project.

Gender: Dancemakers from the Map were 90% women, as opposed to this study, where 75% were women. However, the chart on page 76 of the Mapping Project report shows almost the same 75%-25% gender split for Artistic Directors.

Slight Contrasts:

Contemporary Dance: The discipline breakdown of the Map was 32% modern, whereas almost all of the focus group artists worked in contemporary dance. However, the selection process used for the focus group participants was purposeful, and focused primarily on contemporary dance.

Payment of Dancers: 42% of dancemakers in the Map do not pay their dancers, as opposed to only 6% of our group. This may be because, as shown in the focus groups, contemporary dance choreographers are deeply committed to paying dancers, regardless of the sacrifices that they must make to do so, including forgoing their own payment.

Appendix N. Authors' Bios



Since 1996, Callahan Consulting for the Arts has served arts organizations with strategic planning, resource development, evaluation and field-wide research.

Highlights of Planning and Fundraising

- Conducted a planning process for the Washington Ballet, to assist it in opening a new facility in Anacostia, an area of great historical significance to African American culture in Washington, DC. Recommendations are currently being implemented by the Artistic Director and their board's community relations committee. The enthusiasm about the report resulted in it being disseminated to 125, including other arts partners in the facility.
- Conducted a strategic planning process for the Chicago Community Trust, culminating in a plan for dance service provision. The extensive research illuminated artists' needs to dance leadership in the city, including artists and funders, and the report was strongly endorsed by the dance community.
- Facilitated a planning process for the Hall of Mirrors at Glen Echo Park (MD), to determine the feasibility of rebuilding this facility and a management structure that would support such a campaign.
- Conducted a planning process for Urban Bush Women (NY), to assess and address development, internal operations, staffing, and major donor efforts, resulting in enhanced understanding of these major and new relationships with potential donors.
- Facilitated a national team in planning for the National Performance Network, which culminated in seven figure funding from a major national foundation. Also conducted a successful planning process for Washington Performing Arts Society, culminating in multi-year foundation support.
- Facilitated numerous retreats to build consensus and capacity for national and local organizations such as the National Association of Artist Organizations, the Hurston Wright Foundation (MD), and Washington Shakespeare Company (VA).
- Brings expertise in foundation research and outstanding success in proposal development for organizations such as the Washington Performing Arts Society and The Washington Ballet.
- Provides technical assistance in fundraising for small organizations with limited development staff and teaches fundraising workshops for organizations such as the Smithsonian Institution and the Cultural Alliance of Greater DC.

Highlights of Philanthropy, Evaluation and Dance Research

- Manages Dance/USA's National College Choreography Initiative, a funding program which, as a result of its impact, received renewed funding from the NEA.
- Developed the curriculum for *Program Evaluation for Arts Organizations*, a course at the Association of Performing Arts Presenters' Winter Institute, in conjunction with Innovation Network, in order to increase organizations' understanding and skills in this important area.
- Conducted research on dance communities in major cities across the country, including Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle and Minneapolis, which was used by funders to better understand the field. Completed a national comparative study on dance communities for The Pew Charitable Trusts in order to illuminate issues facing the dance field and inform policy decisions.
- Trains and advises organizations in evaluation in both one-on-one settings and gatherings such as the Dance/USA Roundtable and Council meetings. Designs, conducts, analyzes, and presents evaluations involving focus groups, interviews, surveys and other qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Publishing

- *Singing Our Praises: Case Studies in the Art of the Evaluation* (2005) commissioned by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, demystifies evaluation by highlighting examples of how arts presenters have used it to learn about their success. Real-life stories, guides and techniques from other fields are used to train practitioners to design their own evaluations.
- *National College Choreography Initiative: Encore: A Year of Success* (2005). Building on its first round, the National College Choreography Initiative continues to experience unprecedented success, as evidenced by the thousands of artists, students and audience members it serves across this country. This publication captures the effect that prestigious dance artists had on campuses across the country during 2003, not only through their profound engagement with students, but also in the waves of activity they generated on the local level.
- *Artist-College Collaboration: Issues, Trends and Vision*, published by Dance/USA. Based on a series of national forums for choreographers and college faculty, this report explores the profound changes that are underway among professional artists and dance departments across the country.
- *The Art of Evaluation: Transforming the Research Process into a Creative Journey*, a three-part guide to assist organizations with this area of growing importance to funders. First appeared in the Dance/USA Journal, and later reprinted in Theater Communications Group's Centerpiece, for senior management in the theater field.
- *The National College Choreography Initiative: Supporting the Past, Present and Future of American Dance*, which documents and evaluates the dramatic impact of this program that was funded by the NEA, along with national foundations.
- *Reaffirming the Tradition of the New*, for the National Performance Network, a retrospective on issues that face alternative and community based arts presenters, and which formed the basis of their strategic planning efforts that culminated in multi-year funding from national sources.

Suzanne Callahan, CFRE, Founder, served as panelist/site visitor for the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation and the NEA. She was Senior Specialist for the Dance Program at the NEA for nine years, where she gained a broad understanding of dance artists, presenters, and service organizations. A Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE), she has spoken and published for national and local arts organizations and funders including, in addition to those listed above, the Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers, the Association Foundation Group, and American University's Arts Management Program. Callahan holds an M.A. in Dance Education as well as a Certificate in Fundraising from George Washington University, a B.A. in Social Policy from Northwestern University, and completed post-graduate study in program evaluation and research methods at George Washington University.

Brooke Belott, Client Associate

Brooke Belott brings experience in dance, administration, writing, and publishing. She graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park, with degrees in Dance and English, and now dances with choreographer Ed Tyler. She lives just outside New York City, where she is pursuing a career in contemporary dance, working in development at Second Stage Theatre, and interning at Movement Research.