INTRODUCTION

2020 called on 4Culture to be present, transparent, and nimble in new ways. While we succeeded some times and failed others, what remained the same was our commitment to learning how to do better and our source of inspiration: the cultural community of King County.

If you’ve explored our previous Annual Reports, you’ll quickly notice that we’ve taken a different approach this year. Where we usually share information with you through the framework of our four main departments—Arts, Heritage, Preservation, and Public Art—this report reflects our new reality of overlapping disciplines and non-linear timelines. We’ve moved back and forth within our COVID-19 response framework of Relief, Response, Recovery, and as the stark reality of our world’s racial injustices are newly laid bare, 4Culture staff across all departments have come together to respond.

4Culture 2020 Annual Report

COMBINED PROGRAM GRANTS

BUILDING FOR EQUITY CAPACITY BUILDING
applicants 58
awards 31
awarded $747,050

BUILDING FOR EQUITY LEARNING CIRCLE STIPENDS
participants 30
cohort 19

OPEN 4CULTURE
applicants 14
awards 12
awarded $18,000

SUSTAINED SUPPORT GRANTS

ARTS
awards 368
awarded $2,021,250

HERITAGE
awards 50
awarded $636,606

PRESERVATION
awards 24
awarded $122,110

RELIEF 3  REOPEN 4  RECOVERY 5  RACIAL EQUITY 6  BRIGHT SPOTS 7  PUBLIC ART 8  ARTS 9  HERITAGE 10  PRESERVATION 11  STAFF & VOLUNTEERS 12  FINANCIALS 13
RELIEF

Overnight, the day-to-day work of supporting King County’s cultural sector became a series of questions. Was our First Thursday gallery opening still on? Could we safely host our office hours-style Hello4Culture gathering at the Sammamish YMCA? What’s the simplest possible grant application we can create? Just how fast can we get checks out the door?

Perhaps the most critical component of what resulted from these early-COVID questions was our Cultural Relief Fund. With support from the King County Council, the federal CARES Act, and our budget, we were able to distribute $4.6 million to 1,111 organizations and cultural workers across all County districts. The grants rolled out in three phases—April, June, and October—and prioritized applicants with the highest levels of need via several indicators including the King County/Seattle Foundation Community of Opportunity Index.

We also keenly felt our community’s need for more than financial support. Several of our ongoing programs pivoted quickly to help provide information, connection, and reassurance:

- Hello4Culture, previously a monthly meetup in cities and towns outside Seattle, became a weekly webcast. In this digital space, we talked through the often-overwhelming amount of new information in community and found inspiration in the ways artists and creators responded to the crisis.

- Artists Up expanded its partnership with Mentorly, an online mentorship platform, to provide free consultation services to help artists and arts organizations navigate processes and forms for income assistance, unemployment, emergency services, housing, finance, taxes, healthcare, and more.

- Our website became a hub for sharing COVID-19 resources of all kinds. It continues to grow and expand, now featuring a submission form for contributions from the community.

- The Public Art team collaborated with Amplifier as part of their global call for artwork around the themes of public health and safety to promote mental health and well-being during these stressful times. Ten artists from King County were selected to share their powerful work.

- We extended the biennial Sustained Support Program for a third year through a simplified application process that enabled cultural organizations to more easily access funding to meet the challenges of operating during the recovery phase of the pandemic.
Reopen

In summer 2020 organizations across King County worked to safely create and provide cultural experiences for people and families. For many organizations, this meant shifting to digital programming or adapting their spaces to meet public health guidelines. All of these shifts required significant investments at a time in which revenues were scarce. 4Culture’s Reopen Program committed $1.4 million to support King County cultural organizations and historic properties in their efforts to reopen to the public during the pandemic.

At the beginning of the pandemic, 4Culture’s own physical exhibition space—Gallery 4Culture—was closed per public health guidelines. To continue supporting and spotlighting artists, we developed PAUSE/PLAY. This series of virtual experiences offered a creative break from life in quarantine and featured two artists or artist teams each month with web and social media profiles, studio visit videos, and original downloadable digital backgrounds for Zoom meetings.

Denise Dillerbeck and David Lockington. Northwest Sinfonietta (LeMay - America’s Car Museum) © 2020. Photo: Derek Klein

Crew member Ed Brown handling the lines (Steamer Virginia V) © 2020 Photo: Debra Alderman

Andrew McShea. Whim W'Him (Myrtle Edwards Park) © 2020. Photo: Stefano Altamura

Junko Yamamoto. Between Consciousness (PAUSE/PLAY Zoom background) © 2020
When COVID-19 hit King County in early spring 2020, 4Culture was just completing a six-month process to complete our three-year strategic plan. Suddenly gatherings were prohibited and there was immediate and devastating financial impact to the cultural sector. Still using the goalposts of our plan, 4Culture began to assess. We implemented a statewide survey partnering with 13 organizations to better understand the impact and identify the sector’s needs to restart cultural activities in preparation for recovery. Working closely with the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS), 4Culture specifically analyzed data from King County and published findings on critical needs and time-sensitive resources for cultural workers and organizations.

4Culture worked with its survey partners to bring these preliminary findings to policymakers in advocating for more funding for cultural nonprofits and a social safety net that includes creatives and creative industries.

The 4Culture COVID-19 Recovery Task Force is another way 4Culture is working with partners to build a more equitable cultural sector. The Task Force represents 12 different cultural sector networks along with several individual artists, academics, and thought partners. The group convened in August 2020 with the charge to explore the dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on King County’s cultural sector, create a vision for sector-wide recovery and help prioritize how 4Culture and its partners can equitably respond to the public health crisis.

In February, the Task Force drafted the Recovery Framework, a roadmap to rebuilding King County’s cultural sector after the impacts of COVID-19 and a vision and approach toward a full and equitable recovery. The Task Force will continue to meet through August to advise 4Culture on a Recovery Program and to share their own efforts towards a new, more equitable recovery.
In late May, along with the whole world, we felt the impact of the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police. The global protests that ensued—the King County nexus of which took place on Seattle’s Capitol Hill, barely a mile from our office—caused us to rededicate ourselves to our ongoing racial equity work and to ask what more we could be doing.

As the world called for an end to racialized police violence, cultural workers across King County lent their skills in service of this vision. At 4Culture, we looked for ways to support their efforts. An action team composed of staff, board, and advisory committee members came together to clarify our role in this movement and to identify ways we could quickly direct funds to artist activists. An incredible lineup of performers from our Touring Arts Roster gave voice to the sorrow, anger, and hope of this moment in a virtual concert series we produced and shared. Our Arc Artist Fellowship—which provides operational funding to artists using an annually-changing eligibility requirement, informed by the previous year’s fellows—chose to fund artists between the ages of 18 and 25 years old creating artwork that challenges structures of power.

These actions happened alongside our ongoing racial equity work. Recent years have seen us adopt new hiring and board recruitment practices, a permanent Racial Equity Team on staff, and a new mission statement that puts racial equity at the forefront. With those foundations in place, we spent 2020 bringing them into our funding practices in more concrete ways. Building for Equity—seeded by a $20 million investment from the King County Executive and Council and driven by a community advisory task force—rehabilitated our Cultural Facilities grant program through a combination of funding, technical support, and strategic partnerships. We also piloted equity investment strategies that balance the restrictions of RCW 49.60.400 with our mission, vision, and values. Using cultural health indicators such as King County’s Communities of Opportunity index and income qualifiers, we took steps to begin to rebalance funding inequities towards those most deeply impacted by racist systems. What we learned this year will help us iterate as we head into 2021.
Artist team Johnson Ramirez unveiled a comprehensive plan for King County Metro’s RapidRide Expansion program. The plan, created over the course of eight months, is a reflection of time spent with bus drivers, King County Metro Staff, riders, and transit-lovers featuring playful visual vignettes by illustrator Aaron Bagley. The plan will be integral to the RapidRide experience of the future and will engage a multitude of artists spanning numerous disciplines—watch for artworks to take shape as each new line begins service between 2021-2025.
Artist Natasha Marin’s Black Imagination: Sites of Power is the continuation of a 3-year project to uplift and celebrate Black voices. Originally designed as in-person exhibitions and theatrical performances, Marin quickly pivoted to an interactive, digital media experience that showcases collaborations with over 40 artists, curators, performers, and filmmakers. Working with Director Jay O’Leary Woods, Marin’s collaboration created new video and audio works that center Black creative communities through dynamic adaptations from the book Black Imagination resulting in interviews, performances, and musical compositions.
Playwright Rachel Atkins’s research-based play Ain’t (Y)Our History is about the lesser told stories of race relations within the women’s suffrage movement. It was originally intended as a free public presentation to encourage community engagement around equity and voting rights. After the COVID-19 shutdown, it shifted to an online reading with the actors and Azeotrope theatre spending significant time to make the new platform work. In conjunction with a livestream panel, part of Washington’s Votes for Women Centennial, the performance reached 1,200 people.
Even though the Mukai Farmhouse, the historic home of an entrepreneurial, Japanese American immigrant family, closed due to the pandemic, this Vashon Island site continues to serve as a community resource. Last spring, it was a temporary COVID-19 testing location serving over 100 people. Friends of Mukai continue to welcome visitors to the formal Japanese garden designed by Kuni Mukai through creative programs. A Haiku contest generated 250 poems, posted online and throughout the garden and grounds, enjoyed by those walking by.
“Paneling for 4Culture during the pandemic profoundly affected me on a personal level. I still lack words to describe the experience of feeling indelibly connected to so many others in the aftermath of the shutdowns.”
— TATIANA GARMENDIA
## Financials

### Revenues and Other Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lodging Tax Revenue (1)</td>
<td>—</td>
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<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td>King County Public Art Revenue</td>
<td>$518,572</td>
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<td>King County Appropriations</td>
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<td>Advances from King County</td>
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<td>Public Art Consulting Revenue</td>
<td>$31,045</td>
<td>$161,623</td>
<td>$90,781</td>
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<td>Investment Earnings</td>
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<td>Miscellaneous Other</td>
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<td><strong>Total Revenues</strong></td>
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### Expenditures and Other Uses

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<tr>
<td>Arts, Heritage, and Preservation Grant Programs</td>
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<td>Public Art Projects</td>
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<td>$2,143,067</td>
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<td>CARES Act Pass-Through</td>
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<td>Building for Culture Facility Investment Program</td>
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<td>Debt Service (3)</td>
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<td>Management and General Supporting Activities</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenditures and Other Uses</strong> (2)</td>
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### Fund Balances

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<th>2019</th>
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<td>General Fund</td>
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<td>Lodging Tax Special Revenue Fund</td>
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<td>1% for Art Special Revenue Fund</td>
<td>$11,212,470</td>
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<td>$6,418,663</td>
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<td>Cultural Special Account Fund</td>
<td>$5,205,124</td>
<td>$16,510,042</td>
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<td><strong>Total Fund Balances</strong></td>
<td>$28,741,456</td>
<td>$36,638,116</td>
<td>$42,857,545</td>
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### Notes

2020 financial information is based on unaudited fund financial statements. Requests for the most recent complete audited financial report should be addressed to 4Culture’s finance department at 4Culture, 101 Prefontaine Place S, Seattle, WA 98104.

(1) Current legislation temporarily discontinues the use of lodging tax receipts for cultural purposes in King County until 2021. The Cultural Special Account is the designated source of funds for arts and heritage grant programs through 2020.

(2) Total revenues and expenditures differ on an annual basis due to timing factors in the inflows and outflows of the various programs’ financial resources.

(3) Required payments to King County for principal and interest on County debt issued for arts and heritage cultural facilities grants prior to the creation of 4Culture and County debt issued for the Building for Culture program.