

General Operating Support (GOS) Stakeholder Survey Summary

RACC conducted a stakeholder survey in January to receive feedback on the General Operating Support (GOS) Grant Program. This survey was conducted anonymously and was distributed to all current GOS program member organizations, over 150 arts organization not currently receiving RACC GOS, and made available to the community on RACC's website. GOS is the single largest funding program at RACC which funds 55 arts organizations across the community spectrum and helps to support a wide range of arts programming made available to the Portland tri-county public.

RESPONSES

244

completed surveys

- 58% identify as a staff member of a non-profit arts organization.
 - 50% Executive or Managing Director with the remaining half split between artistic, development or other functions
 - 63% of these respondents work for organizations currently receiving RACC GOS.
- 15% identify as a board member at a non-profit arts organization.
- 27% identify as an interested community member.

141

arts organization staff

- 23% from organizations with budgets under \$150,000.
- 52% from organizations with budgets between \$150,000 and \$5 million.
- 25% from organizations with budgets over \$5 million.

KEY FINDINGS

1. Both organizations and community respondents find supporting a wide range of organizations through General Operating Support to be very or somewhat important, including a diverse set of artistic disciplines (81%), organizations led by communities of color or other underrepresented communities (75%), well-established (64%) and new organizations (67%).
2. Most arts organization respondents (65%) think RACC should maintain the membership model for General Operating Support, in which member organizations receive an award each year as long as they remain eligible and submit a report. A high percentage also favor awarding membership to new organizations annually (58%).

KEY FINDINGS, continued

3. RACC suggested a variety of methods for evaluating equity work. 60% of respondents rated the presence of an equity plan or statement as a “very appropriate” method – the strongest agreement in our survey. The demographic make-up of artists/contractors (45%), and the completion of an organizational equity assessment (42%) were also identified as “very appropriate.” All suggested methods of equity evaluation were strongly supported as “very” or “somewhat appropriate” (82% or higher).
4. Those who receive General Operating Support believe the current eligibility requirements to be appropriate (78%); while just over half of those who are not in the program would like the eligibility requirements to be changed (54%).
5. A majority of respondents favor a multi-year, fixed award as opposed to an annual competitive process, with 59% preferring to apply every three years and 23% preferring every two years.
6. Of the 141 arts organization staff respondents, 48 (34%) marked the GOS eligibility requirements as not appropriate. Over a quarter of those responses (27%) felt the eligibility should be stricter, while 73% wanted the eligibility to be less strict. In the comments provided, having a 501(c)(3) and being in existence for at least three years were largely supported as requirements, while having eligible income of \$75K for at least three years and at least one paid professional administrative staff on payroll for at least a year were the most recommended areas to consider for change.
7. Audience development is the primary way that arts organizations use collected demographics (77%), as well as submissions for RACC (71%) and other funder grant applications and reports (73%).

OTHER INPUT

Some respondents offered comments and also requested an opportunity to provide feedback to RACC staff. Through these additional opportunities to engage we learned that many understand how complicated this process is due to the diverse group of stakeholders and ideologies on fund distribution. We also heard from many respondents about the need for RACC to have a strong relationship with individual artists; continued community engagement; and the need for RACC to understand Portland’s unique cultural and historic disparities.

NEXT STEPS

Over the next few months RACC will be making modifications to the GOS program. RACC will be taking into consideration the results of the survey, as well as the other factors which impact our work such as fluctuation of funding, historical disparities, and community growth. Our guiding principles are to ensure that the program is transparent, flexible, strategic, representative, and inclusive. By revising our funding model, we hope to foster a richer, stronger, and more diverse arts community.

Although the survey is now closed, organization representatives and community members can continue to ask questions and provide input to the process by emailing grants@racc.org.

[Click here](#) to see the full results of the survey on RACC’s website.