



DC COMMISSION ON ARTS & HUMANITIES

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**  
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\* Agency Development\*Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access\*Improved Grantmaking\* Community Engagement\*CAH Beyond Grants\*

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The following is a summary of the agency’s activities and operations:

**Community Engagement**

**FY22 DC Arts Tele-Townhall: Going Forward Together**

On Thursday, October 28, 2021, Commission Chair Reggie Van Lee and Executive Director Heran Sereke-Brhan hosted the first virtual tele townhall of the fiscal year to share accomplishments from FY21 and the new and invigorated vision of the Commission.

Chair Van Lee presented the three pillars guiding the Commission’s work: the focus on governance and interdependence between the Commission, the Executive Office of the Mayor and DC Council in carrying out its mission; the roadmap laid out by the new three-year Strategic Plan; and the importance of implementing the recommendations of the Task Force on Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. Executive Director Sereke-Brhan shared key highlights from FY2021, including successes in improved grantmaking with expanded reach and breadth, progress on Task Force recommendations, and new initiatives in community engagement, programs, and partnerships. Over 200 participants attended the tele townhall.

**Grants and Public Art Update**

Executed Grants Moving to Payment (October 1, 2021-to present)

<b>Grants by Type</b>	<b>Number of Awards</b>	<b>% of Completion</b>
Individuals	411	18%
Organizations	304	27%
Public Art	9	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>48%</b>

Since the beginning of fiscal year 2022 on October 1<sup>st</sup>, CAH has awarded 724 grants and has received and executed 340 to-date. These are now moving forward through the requisition and payment process.

**Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access**

**National Assembly of State Arts Agencies – Anti-Bias Training**

From October to December 2021, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) is offering professional development opportunities for three groups, Executive, General and Council/Board Member, to reduce bias in public service missions. CAH Executive and Deputy Directors have completed the three-part training and staff and Commissioners are registered to participate in upcoming sessions. This fulfills a key recommendation by the Task Force on Equity, Inclusion and Belonging to conduct equity training for staff and commissioners.

## **Beyond Grantmaking**

### **Americans for the Arts (AFTA): Arts & Economic Prosperity 6**

Along with seventeen statewide partners and over 200 local communities to-date, CAH is participating in the Americans for the Arts' *Arts & Economic Prosperity 6* (AEP6), the sixth national study of the economic impact of spending by nonprofits arts and cultural organizations and their audiences. In a recent update, AFTA shared that it "has made the important decision to address equity and inclusion as a critical component of the study's methodology, organizational participation, collection of data, and communications strategy" and to "center the perspective of BIPOC communities throughout the AEP6 study process." As a local study partner, CAH will receive economic impact findings for the District of Columbia and comparative findings for all other participating partners, improved economic modeling techniques supported by the arts and cultural industry and its audiences, and media training on use of the study. The study will be completed in June 2023.

### **DC Cultural Plan**

The DC Cultural Plan was released in March 2019 but has yet to be put into action, due in part to CAH's transition to an independent agency in FY20 and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee of the Whole, Council of the District of Columbia, has recommended that CAH work with the Office of Planning to assemble and facilitate the Cultural Planning Steering Committee (required by statute) to review the recommendations made in the Cultural Plan, and to work with the Council and the Mayor to determine how to implement the Cultural Plan best and to determine what resources should be allocated for the Cultural Plan. CAH staff are in communication with OP regarding the Steering Committee, with plans for a first meeting of the Committee in December or January.

### **COVID-19 Arts Impact Study**

CAH is in the final stages of soliciting and contracting a firm to conduct an economic and social impact study of COVID-19 on the District's arts and cultural sector. The selected firm will seek a deep understanding of the various immediate and long-term pandemic-related challenges faced by the sector itself and the sector's synergies and relations with other industries. Additionally, the study will present recommendations for how CAH might best facilitate the recovery of the arts and cultural sector.