



springboard

SPRINGBOARD SUMMARY REPORT 2016: BUILDING ARTS & CULTURE CAPACITY



Since 2009, Springboard has propelled 48 arts organizations to strengthen their capacity to delight, challenge and engage our communities with arts and culture. Springboard was developed by 501 Commons in cooperation with Claudia Bach of AdvisArts.

Select Springboard Alumni

- ArtsEd Washington, 2013
- Auburn Symphony, 2011
- Bellevue Youth Symphony, 2015
- Earshot Jazz, 2011
- Gage Academy of Art, 2015
- Kirkland Arts Center, 2011
- La Sala, 2015
- Macha Monkey, 2014
- NAAM, 2015
- Pacific MusicWorks, 2014
- Reel Grrls, 2012
- Richard Hugo House, 2014
- SANCA, 2010
- Theatre Puget Sound, 2013

Program Overview

Springboard is an action learning program for small and mid-sized arts and cultural organizations designed to increase their capacity to better serve and advance their organizational mission.

Springboard provides a peer-based learning environment that promotes leadership development for participating staff and board members. The program helps participants assess and identify operational issues such as improving business systems, increasing revenue, growing audiences, developing strategic partnerships, and strengthening board governance.

Since 2009 approximately 150 cultural leaders and board trustees have benefited from Springboard.



Learning Together

Springboard participants Doug Staley, Artistic Director at Theater Schmeater and Pallavi Garg, Board Trustee at Tasveer enjoy learning together at the Arts Forum.

SPRINGBOARD COHORT 2016

- Clarion West Writers Workshop
- Path with Art
- Room Circus
- Sound Theatre Company
- Tasveer
- Theater Schmeater
- Youth in Focus



Volunteer consultant Bud Green (center left) gets a healing laugh at Room Circus' medical clowning session at Seattle Children's Hospital.

Working with our Consultants

Each participating organization worked with two volunteer consultants who advised the organization to identify barriers to capacity building, spot opportunities, and develop a tactical action plan to increase organizational capacity. Consultants provided facilitation, project management, knowledge of the arts and cultural sector, and an aptitude for promoting leadership development. Program evaluations for the 2016 cohort reflect that organizations rated the overall satisfaction with their consultants at 3.7 on a scale of 1-4.

"Our consultant was outstanding in guiding us through the process and bringing his knowledge to us. Springboard really opened our eyes to challenges facing the organization and helped us see our potential." ~ Sound Theatre Company

"Our consultants personified active listening...they heard not only what we said, but what we were implying between the lines. That external ear was very important in moving us to a broader understanding of what we needed to do to reach our goals." ~Theater Schmeater

Assessment & Key Issues

The 2016 cohort met between February and September. Participants completed a new organizational assessment tool developed by 501 Commons designed to measure five core areas:

1. Governance and Boards
2. Fundraising and Financial Management
3. Communications and Relationships
4. Planning, Administration and IT
5. Management and Culture

Based on assessment results, each organization prioritized three key issues to address during the Springboard process. Issues included defining organizational structures, improving board governance, establishing program evaluation metrics, and volunteer management.

Peer-based Action Learning

Springboard provides an active learning environment for organizations to learn from each other and skilled arts management experts. The cohort met five times between February and September 2016. Skills session and the Arts Forum topics were tailored to the specific issues participants were tackling. Most organizations shared the common problem of needing to increase financial resources and strengthen board relations. In response to these issues, we provided skills sessions on "Crafting a Compelling Case Statement" presented by Ariel Glassman of the Ostara Group, "Board Governance" with 501 Commons Executive Director Nancy Long, and "Dynamic Donor Relations" with Springboard Program Manager Debra Webb.

Springboard Arts Forum

Jim Kelly from 4Culture and Randy Engstrom from the City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture joined the cohort in a lively discussion on trends and challenges in the arts ecosystem including three workshops:

Meaningful Partnerships – *within and beyond the arts sector* facilitated by Vivian Chan (Wing Luke Museum) and Vivian Phillips (Seattle Theater Group).

I Love My Board! – *developing and leading a dynamic board* facilitated by John Boylan (Arts Corps Board Trustee) and Priya Frank (On the Boards Board Trustee).

Funding and Scalability – *staff and board in alignment* facilitated by Marsha Wolf (Seattle Symphony) and Alex Curio (Northwest African American Museum).

"501 Commons brought a disciplined, introspective and practical approach to strengthening arts nonprofits. The tools, presentations and discussions have already helped us define our goals, which will help the community." ~Tasveer

Value of Springboard

Consultants provided 96 hours per organization, a market value of \$16,800 per organization. Participants attended three professional development skills sessions valued at \$2,400. The program is valued at \$120,000 in total market value. Organizations paid \$750 on average for the program.

Program support provided by:

