

Detroit Youth Arts Provider Network Proposed Charter

Summary

The Detroit Youth Arts Provider Network will be a non-hierarchical, self-governed and co-created Network, with DEYA serving as non-voting Network Coordinators. The Network membership will include organizations and programs from all sectors, and of all sizes and shapes who are committed to providing ongoing youth arts experiences for youth in the city of Detroit. While individuals such as classroom arts teachers, teaching artists and youth artists will not be members of this Network, they will be represented in Peer Networks which will be catalyzed in the future.

This proposed non-binding Network Charter was created with the support of a community-led Design Team and two community Design Charrettes. Much of the language and concepts included in this Charter come directly from *Converge* and the book "Impact Networks." www.converge.net/toolkit/network-charter-template

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I. NETWORK INTENTIONS

Purpose & Mission

Purpose

To connect Detroit Youth Arts Providers to advance their field and collectively create a truly equitable and sustainable youth arts ecosystem supporting the historically under-invested young artists of Detroit for generations to come.

Mission

The Detroit Youth Arts Providers Network exists to unite and elevate Detroit's youth arts providers, large and small. With unwavering commitment to racial and economic equity, the Network creates a platform to help all providers achieve visibility and access to resources, funding and opportunities. The Network serves as a conduit between youth arts providers and their communities, ensuring providers have the requisite tools needed to enact change and enrich the lives of the children of Detroit as they develop crucial life skills shaped by the discipline of the arts.

Participation

The Detroit Youth Arts Providers Network will engage all those who are seeking to provide high quality ongoing youth arts opportunities for and with Detroit youth. Centering Black and Brown youth and leadership, members of the Network will have a sincere commitment to building a youth arts ecosystem which can empower every Detroit young artist, helping them find their voice and achieve their dreams. With an understanding that there is currently significant racial and economic inequity between youth in the city of Detroit and youth in the surrounding suburbs, this Network will focus on youth arts providers located in the city and/or those who are committed to serving Detroit residents, especially those who have been traditionally under-represented in youth arts programs.

Network Members will Include:

- Creative Youth Development organizations in Detroit whose core mission is to empower youth through the Arts
- Ongoing Youth-focused arts programs, Arts and Culture organizations in Detroit or which serve primarily Detroit youth
- Ongoing Youth Arts-focused programs at Youth Development Organizations, Community Development Organizations, Faith-based Entities, Neighborhood Groups, and Social Service Agencies which serve primarily Detroit youth
- Detroit-based after-school program providers and sites which offer ongoing arts activities
- Organizations located outside of the city of Detroit which have programs that take place at Detroit sites and/or have programs whose population is over 50% city residents.

Members all have equal power and decision-making authority and a provider's size has no impact on Network decision making. (see Network Governance on Page 5). The provider's legal definition is not a factor in membership. While many members

will be 501c3 nonprofits, organizations/programs that are for-profit or subsidiaries of for-profit organizations, volunteer-led initiatives, university-affiliated or any other structure can be members if they fit the below characteristics (although it may impact regrants opportunities if funders require nonprofit status.)

Network Members will have the following characteristics:

- They collectively represent many parts of the Detroit youth arts ecosystem
- They have demonstrated support and passion for making Detroit youth arts more equitable, accessible, inclusive and sustainable
- They are willing to work across sectors and boundaries to engage with people who may have very different perspectives and priorities, exploring their own biases and giving appropriate space to those who have been historically excluded from the Detroit youth arts conversation in the past

Network Membership is NOT for those who:

- Have no problem with the inequitable status quo of youth arts in Detroit
- Are not interested in systems change to impact the entire Detroit youth arts ecosystem, but only in what the Network can do for them
- Are not willing to share resources and expertise with other providers
- Are not providing direct service, not engaged “in the trenches” of providing ongoing youth arts experiences for Detroit youth
- Do not have a track-record of – and/or ongoing commitment to – providing high quality youth arts experiences for Detroit youth
- Are doing youth arts work that exploits young people or families
- Do not see the arts as essential to positive youth development and education.

Individuals and Peer Networks

The Detroit Youth Arts Provider Network is specifically designed for organizations and programs which provide ongoing quality arts experiences for Detroit youth, so individuals cannot be members. The Network is well aware that individuals – particularly classroom arts teachers, teaching artists, youth artists, parents/family and school administrators – play an essential role in Detroit’s Youth Arts ecosystem. Therefore, individuals will be invited to participate in Network activities to share their expertise and unique perspectives.

The Detroit Youth Arts Provider Network was developed through community engagement to meet the needs of Providers. Similarly, it is DEYA’s intention to engage these communities to catalyze Peer Networks – and to partner with peer networks that already exist. The goal of these peer networks will be to support the needs of arts educators, teaching artists, and youth in the arts.

Potential

Overall intentions of the Detroit Youth Arts Provider Network are:

- Building a community of peer support
- Creating power through collective action
- Bringing new resources to the field to improve sustainability
- Accelerating shared learning
- Reducing duplication of effort
- Including diverse voices
- Breaking down organizational silos

II. NETWORK ACTIVITIES

The actions of the Detroit Youth Arts Network are co-created by the members of the Network. At the initial launch of the Network a basic structure has been designed by the Network Coordinators and the Design Team and Charette Members. This structure can be adjusted and/or redesigned by the membership as the Network evolves. (See detailed list of specific activities in the Appendix page 9). The initial activity structure is as follows:

Network Conveings

The full Network will convene 3 times a year, in January, May and September. At these convenings, deeper connections will be made between members, learnings will be shared and proposals will be decided upon. The approximately three months between convenings will be used for Network-led Project Teams and Learning Circles.

Project Teams and Learning Circles

At each convening, members can propose teams/circles that they would like to lead and/or partner on. These groups meet during the three months between convenings and seek to complete their goals in time to share with the Network membership at the next Convening. At that Convening, the membership will decide whether to continue and/or adjust the group goals, or may decide that the group accomplished its goal and does not need to go forward. Members can also make the decision to join or remove themselves from teams at the time of the Convening. (see detailed explanations of Project Teams and Learning Circles in the Appendix page 10).

Additional Programs/Events

Members will be invited to participate in other one-time or short-term programs and events including Professional Development sessions, guest speakers, workshops, cross-sector think tanks, etc.

Affinity Cohorts

The Network may choose to develop Affinity cohorts that would meet on a regular or semi-regular basis to provide peer support. These could be groups such as Executive Directors, Program Directors, Youth Support Coordinators, Youth Arts alumni, etc.

III. NETWORK GOVERNANCE

The Detroit Youth Arts Providers Network will function as a non-hierarchical, self-governed and co-created Network. There are no membership fees for the launch of the Network. There are four different categories of roles that those who meet the parameters can choose for their involvement in the Network: Leads, Partners, Follows, and Honors.

Membership Roles

(These roles are non-binding and fluid for the internal functioning of the Network. All Network members will be listed without reference to role or category)

Leads: *We will take responsibility for making this Network happen.*

- Leads will frame key opportunities as proposals and present them to Network members for collective decision making on significant matters
- Leads act as thought partners to the Network Coordinators regarding day to day operations
- Leads will attend and help to design each Convening
- Leads will participate in Project Teams and Learning Circles as leaders and participants
- Leads will help coordinate additional programs and events, as their capacity allows
- Leads will be included in all Network-wide communications
- Leads will be listed as members of the Network

Partners: *We will actively work with the Leads to make this Network happen.*

- Partners will attend all Convenings
- Partners will share ideas and feedback with Leads and Network Coordinators between Convenings
- Partners will participate in Project Teams and Learning Circles as leaders and participants
- Partners will support additional programs and events, as their capacity allows
- Partners will be included in all Network-wide communications
- Partners will be listed as members of the Network

Follows: *We would like to stay informed about how the Network progresses.*

- Follows will attend at least two of the annual Convenings
- Follows will be included in all Network-wide communications
- Follows are not expected to participate in Project Teams and Learning Circles, but may as their capacity allows
- Follows will be invited to other Network Programs/Events
- Partners will be listed as members of the Network

Honors: *We appreciate this is happening; however, this is not of particular interest to my organization/program at this time.*

- These providers will not be listed or considered members of the Network and will not be included in communications or programs, but they will have the opportunity to join the Network in a Leads, Partners or Follows roles at an appropriate time in the future.
- These providers will be included in all communications shared with the general public.

Representation of each Member Provider

It is recommended that each member provider designate two people to be their Network representatives. Although each member provider only has one vote during decision-making, it is helpful to have a second person involved to allow for continuity if conflicts or turnover within the organization/program take place. The second person does not have to be an employee, but could be a lead volunteer, board member or key contractor. Additional people with the Provider can represent the organization on Project Teams and Learning Circles.

Network Coordinators

Coordination is the work of organizing the Network's internal systems and structures to enable participants to share information and advance collective work. Coordinators establish and maintain Network operations, support knowledge management, and assist Network teams. (See Network Coordinator Responsibilities in Appendix pages 10-11)

DEYA (Detroit Excellence in Youth Arts), a program of Connect Detroit, will act as the Network Coordinators of the Network, in addition to seeking financial resources to support the Network. While DEYA worked with Detroit youth arts providers to catalyze the Network, it will remain organizationally separate and independent of the Network. DEYA, in the role of Network Coordinators or Staff of Connect Detroit will not have a vote in decisions made by the Network.

It should be noted that DEYA will be raising funds and coordinating for impact outside of and in addition to its support for the Network membership and programs. (For a more detailed description of DEYA's focus areas, see Appendix page 11)

Fiduciary Responsibility

Connect Detroit will act as the fiduciary for funds the organization secures for DEYA and the Detroit Youth Arts Providers Network. Connect Detroit will disburse grant funds based on budgets presented to funding organizations and grant amounts received. Modifications may be made as circumstances change (a partner organization cannot fulfill its scope) or if full grant amounts are not awarded. Connect Detroit will honor contractual grant agreements with foundation funders until said grant agreement expires.

The Detroit Youth Arts Providers Network is not a project of Connect Detroit, however, DEYA leaders will continue acting as Network Coordinators as long as this role is appropriate, practical, and feasible.

Network Decision-Making

The Network makes decisions by Consent. Day to day decisions about minor issues may be made by Network Coordinators with support of Network Leads, when appropriate, and shared back with Network members. Significant decisions about purpose, participation, Network focus areas, priorities, and resource allocation are brought to the members. Leads work with Network Coordinators and Partners to develop a proposal for a course of action, the Network discusses and votes using a Consent-based process. Network Coordinators do not have a vote in this process. The consent-based decision-making process has three phases: context, clarification, and call for consent. (A detailed explanation of the process can be found in the Appendix pages 11-12)

IV. APPENDIX

Specific Network Activities

This list, which came from the findings of the Needs Assessment and recommendations of the Design Charette, can grow and/or evolve as the Network progresses.

- **Building Bridges** to public entities such as Schools, Libraries, Government Agencies, Parks & Recreation, Greenways, Community Centers, Community Development Organizations, Hospitals, Workforce Development Organizations, Neighborhood Organizations, etc. that can provide platforms to bring more youth arts experiences to more young people.
- **Addressing barriers** for participation by underrepresented Detroit youth, including lack of out-of-school-time transportation, need for health support services, lack of awareness, etc., developing collaborative platforms where multiple youth arts providers can strategize and share resources and expertise to make youth arts more accessible and inclusive.
- **Fundraising Support**, including development training, hiring development staff to create collaborative proposals which organizations would not qualify for by themselves because of the size, capacity or geographic limits, identifying funding to support sustainability and infrastructure benefiting the entire sector. Collaborative Fundraising will never take place for funds that Network members of all sizes can apply for individually – although fundraising support can be offered to members in identifying and applying for those funding opportunities. The focus will be on finding funds for non-programmatic activities that help members’ sustainability such as funds for staffing, facilities and other operational costs
- **Creating a Directory** of all ongoing youth arts opportunities for Detroit youth, 1) providing teachers, principals, and after-school sites with a catalog of community partnership opportunities to support their students, 2) improving awareness of opportunities for youth, parents and families, 3) creating greater connectivity between youth arts providers, and 4) creating a platform for greater collaboration and less duplication in the sector.
- **Supporting Youth Voice** by creating a Detroit young artist congress, where youth arts providers will nominate members from their youth advisory councils and youth leadership teams to steer the course of youth arts in Detroit.
- **Advocating/Marketing for the Importance of Youth Arts** with parents,

schools, funders and policymakers, including open houses, DEMO days, youth arts showcases collaborative platforms and other events to more effectively inform the public of the quality, diversity and impact of Detroit youth arts.

- **Providing Collective Professional Development**, providing opportunities for all youth arts providers – including classroom teachers and teaching artists – to access the most cutting edge learning to support their students, including in SEL, Trauma-informed practices, anti-racist education, culturally-responsive pedagogy.
- **Developing Affinity Cohorts**, allowing for growth and sharing with peers from multiple organizations, including Youth Arts executive leadership, teaching artists, program coordinators, parents, alumni, etc.

Project Teams and Learning Circles

- **Project teams** are organized by members to advance a body of work related to the Network’s mission. While they may go on for an extended period of time, they have specific goals for actions that can be presented at the Network Convenings – or earlier via email if urgency requires. They are not ongoing committees. They have specific tasks to accomplish and goals are reassessed quarterly at each Network Convening.
- **Learning circles** form to combine knowledge, gather information, and generate learning on a specific topic of interest. They may conduct research, provide peer-mentoring on a subject, or bring in an outside speaker or text. Learning Circles usually only exist for a short period of time after they share what they have learned with the Network. In some cases, learning circles evolve into project teams as they shift from gathering information to taking action.

Network Coordinators Responsibilities

1. Keep the Network on track by identifying and framing emerging issues, collecting agenda topics, and supporting the design of convenings and meetings
2. Establish and maintain Network operations including setting up the Network’s online systems, guiding logistics for convenings and other events, tracking regrants and compliance with fiduciary and managing evaluation activities
3. Provide knowledge management by gathering resources and learnings from

Network projects, organizing the information so that it can be easily accessed later, and sharing relevant information with participants

4. Assist Network teams by offering thought partnership, helping with scheduling, and securing meeting locations

DEYA Focus Areas

IMPACT NETWORKS: DEYA will serve as a backbone, providing support for Detroit youth arts networks by acting as a coordinator and raising funds for network initiatives;

INFRASTRUCTURE: DEYA will provide resources and planning support for infrastructure improvements and other funding that supports the entire city of Detroit and arts sectors. This includes addressing out-of-school transportation for all youth arts opportunities and identifying and securing federal and national grants to support the sustainability of the youth arts sector;

PLATFORMS: DEYA will provide collaborative platforms to elevate the work of youth and youth arts providers, including through the Launch Award micro-grants for youth throughout the city, mentorship programs and youth arts showcases and awards;

ADVOCACY: By centralizing information, grass-roots marketing and policy advocacy for the arts sector, DEYA will deliver a catalog of youth arts providers for schools and after-school sites, a centralized database and/or website, marketing efforts to support Detroit youth arts in general and advocating for policy change to support youth arts in Detroit.

Consent-based Decision Making

Context

Context frames the decision to be made: What are the relevant factors? What are the pros and cons that have been considered? What conversations and considerations have already taken place? And finally, what is the recommendation moving forward? Context is presented by those who took part in discussions to formulate the proposal.

Clarification

Clarification allows for any further questions or clarity needed by Network members prior to voting. Facilitators should help ensure that the conversation doesn't veer toward evaluation of ideas but stays with clarity on what is being recommended. Participants are encouraged to consider whether proposals are consistent with the Network's purpose and principles, and to think in terms of what's in the best interest of the Network as a whole, as opposed to what's in the best interest for "me" as an individual or as a representative of an organization or special interest.

Call for Consent

Call for consent uses a 0 to 5 voting framework when the full group is ready to make a decision or assess the level of support and need for further discussion. First, the facilitator restates the proposal and asks participants to vote. Then, the participants respond with a number from 0 to 5 (using fingers, pen and paper, or other means) corresponding to their level of support. The process can also be completed digitally with polling tools if confidentiality is required, if voting with fingers or paper isn't practical, or if detailed records need to be captured.

When voting, participants are invited to choose from one of the following options:

5—Lead: The proposal serves our Network well, and we would like to be one of the leaders in implementing it.

4—Partner: The proposal serves our Network well, and we will partner to support the leaders in implementing it.

3—Follow: The proposal may serve our Network, but we can't offer any capacity toward implementation.

2—Concern: We have concerns about the proposal and will be tracking as implementation moves forward.

1—Caution: We have major concerns about the proposal creating harm and would like to discuss further.

0—Oppose: The proposed course of action is outside a range of tolerance and requires changes before any action is taken.

The proposal goes forward as outlined if there are only 2s and above. If there are 0s or 1s, options include having real-time discussions to resolve objections or scheduling time for the 0s or 1s to meet with the 4s and 5s to resolve issues and find a way to move forward. When we use consent-based decision-making, proposals are encouraged to proceed as long as they are consistent with the Network's purpose and principles and are unlikely to cause harm.