



CULTURAL DATA PROJECT GIVES CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS IN RHODE ISLAND NEW TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT, TRACK THEIR SUCCESS

May 2, 2011, Philadelphia, PA—Arts and cultural organizations in Rhode Island will now have access to new technology to help them strengthen their management capacity and demonstrate their value and impact in their communities. The Cultural Data Project (CDP), a powerful, web-based data collection tool for arts organizations and the cultural field, is launching May 2 with the support of the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts and The Rhode Island Foundation.

The Cultural Data Project has been helping cultural organizations in many states to document and track their financial and programmatic performance, and is now emerging as a national model for collecting and disseminating reliable, standardized data for this often undervalued sector. Operated by The Pew Charitable Trusts, the CDP now reaches more than 10,900 nonprofits in Arizona, California, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania. With support from partners including the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Kresge Foundation, the CDP is working toward national expansion, with the goal of 22 participating states by 2014.

The Cultural Data Project gives cultural organizations the technology to ease the challenges they often face with collecting and organizing information for grant applications and financial reports. Once participating organizations supply the wide range of data—topics like revenue, employment, staffing, and attendance—the CDP allows them to organize their information to meet each participating funder’s requirements.

Participating organizations have access to free, on-demand assistance from a team of accountants specializing in nonprofit finance, who can help them provide accurate data and understand their financial picture more thoroughly. The CDP then serves as a repository so that cultural organizations can track their individual data and trends over time, generate various reports and compare how they operate relative to their peers. For example, a theater organization could both analyze how effective its marketing dollars are in generating ticket revenues and increasing audiences, and compare its annual attendance to groups of similar organizations in its community, or communities in other CDP states.

The project fills a much-needed niche by making reliable, standardized data broadly available to researchers at no cost, to help them analyze and interpret the cultural sector.

The Cultural Data Project is governed by a consortium of organizations in Pennsylvania, including the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, The Heinz Endowments, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, The Pew Charitable Trusts, The Pittsburgh Foundation and the William Penn Foundation.

The Cultural Data Project is brought to Rhode Island by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts and The Rhode Island Foundation. Additional support is provided by The Kresge Foundation.

For more information on the Cultural Data Project, including a full listing of partners for each state, visit www.culturaldata.org.

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