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>>> All right. It looks like everyone joined us from the waiting room. So welcome to our, building bridges in a time of crisis session. If you would, please mute your phone, your computer, to prevent the echos.

That we have going on here.

It is great to see you all today.

Before we begin, I just want to mention that I have posted a link in the chat so you can find the name of the original people in the land in which you reside. Over the next couple of minutes, I would like you to take a moment to find where you're at and to post the name of those people in our chat function. While you're all searching on the map and posting, I have a few minor housekeeping matters to good through. We are providing closed captioning today. You can find a closed captioning button at the bottom of the screen. All you need to do is click that little arrow on that and show subtitles. Or you can view a live transcript. We also have a Spanish language captioning going on. I have posted that link in the chat as well. Just use that link to open a separate browser for you and you will see the transcript there.

Today's session will be a two-part session. The first half will feature two great speakers in a short Q&A session. I will go into further detail on the speakers in a bit. The second half of the discussion will be a roundtable discussion with your peers. If you have any questions for the speakers at any time, insert them in the chat. If you have any technical questions, send them via chat as well. I will watch that closely today. Speaking of chat, let's take a look at the lands in which you reside.

I want to call your attention to the sheer diversity of the physical lands we all call home. At the outset of every convenience to pay respect for the original people, places and cultures much this country.

Now, if you would, please join me in a moment of reflection to honor the lands which we occupy to chit to their stewardship, and to signify our respect for the first nations who are part of the past, present and future of America. Thank you all. I'm happy to kick off the first part of this session.

We have a couple of great speakers here. First, Lori Lobenstine.

From DS4SI. Following Lori is Aviva Kapust. Executive director at the village of arts and humanities.

I'm very pleased to turn things over to Lori, who will share her great work with us. Lori?

>> Hey, everyone. I'm really excited to be here with y'all. Thank

you so much for having me. I'm from the design studio from social intervention. We're based in Boston, Massachusetts.

Our mission is to change our social justice as developed as imagine developed and deployed and we do a lot of that with artists, residents, academics and merchants, everyday folk, young people, elders, and i want to thank together in this moment of of what we call sub emergency. I will share my screen and hopefully share something that is useful to all of us.

Definitely let me know if you are having troubles with my audio or my screen. We are thinking about productive fictions as spaces for collective healing.

COVID-19 has exacerbated the social inequities in our country. Like so many other organizations, we are wrestling with how to welcome our communities back into the community safely. And residents who have never felt welcome in public and even as we do this and work with all sorts of partners, we are faced with almost constant shootings of black people that stopness our tracks.

Images of violence seem to fill our devices over and over. And for some these images add to the trauma of their own and their lived experience of that violence.

Retrauma advertising them again and again.

P incremental and sometimes really tedious processes of the daily work of nurturing and building connections and trust and being there

for each other in ways that can be joyous or in ways that can be Zoom filled.

We are wondering where to go from here and I want to think in this moment, how can an awareness of what Roberto Bedoya calls civic trauma. How do we deal with the pain in our streets, our neighborhood webs cities and towns, in rural neighborhoods. What can artists do in cities and towns, to move beyond our yearning for calm.

And have a broader range of expression of emotion.

Sadness, pain, anger, rage and we are wondering in the long-term how our collective investment in public art and in vibrant public life can build a capacity and imagination for collective healing and social change. And in the hopes that we are all thinking about these things and you notice I have more questions than answers and I'm going to continue to, I want to step into thinking about a social emergency. The social emergency was already here. It is unevenly distributed. We experience it differently. But we thought that we started to use this language when Michael Brown was killed by Daren Wilson. And Daren Wilson was acquitted. And we wanted to call us out of our everyday life and make sure that we all understood that this was a social emergency, even if it impacted us differently. So we decided to create what we call a social emergency response center.

We are also seeing this moment where we can boldly call for change and say policing is not working or these monuments are not working. So we want to say how do we imagine new things? Now kinds of monuments that we might want to see to one tool we developed at the studio, we call it a productive fiction. We create a glimpse of the world that we want and we create it by building a micro space, a temporary space and we invite people in and say what would do you here? People would say, I'm going to lead a workshop about manifestos. We take on the space in downtown Boston because it was not programmed with folks of color from all of the communities around Boston. So there are different ways that we said let's create a space and invite people to shape it with us. This was one of our first productive fictions. If we had public kitchens like public libraries, what would you do there? We are inspired by how when we say public library, it gives the sense we are all welcome. This is for poor people. They want it point someone to it. But we don't think a public library is for someone without books. It is for all of us. What we if we said it is a work in progress. It would make our lives bet earn just by creating a temporary, we got a local main street organization to loan us their space and we created a temporary space and invited people into it. And just invited

people to say, what would you bring and what would you cook and what recipe would you share. What would you do? You can see Tony tipton Martin's beautiful black and white portraits. Can you see a younger artist, and I'm afraid I can't credit her, I don't know her name. Drew a public kitchen there. There is a lot of ways to engage folks and maybe can I do this at my my church or school or youth program. I want to put that out thereof that idea that what can we cocreate. With our art its and co-communities. And moving beyond that yearning just to calm things down and just to get back to normal or really equipping us to hold a space for this broader range of expressions of emotion. And equipping us to be in relationships with each other in ways that are different. Right? So there was a thing about the public kitchen because it didn't say, this is for poor people or a thing about SERC because it didn't say, I'm okay and you're not, that engage us in different ways and helping us it see each other in different ways. Like folks in the community coming out and we knew we knew someone as an activist. We started to build these relationships in ways that can helpness this moment to say, now we can come back together and what do we need to do together? So I wanted to just leave a couple of examples to think about how artists and arts organizations can really think together about these opportunities to ways that can

directly or indirectly heal and imagine new spaces or new ways in the world. And I will end there. I can't really multitask, so I apologize. I haven't been able to check the chat. Maybe you were telling me to do something different. But there it is.

>> Thank you very much, Lori. I really appreciate it. We will have a chance to ask Lori some questions and open the Q&A. So if you have questions, please put them in chat. I'm watching that closely. And now I'm going to turn things over to Aviva from the village of arts and humanities in Philadelphia. Aviva?

>> Hi, everyone. Thank you so much for inviting me to be with you guys today. I just want to make sure that -- okay, there it is. The first thing I wanted to say is just that, I come to this conversation today as a messenger. Not as an expert of any form. Everything that I know and everything my team and I have learned about working in the intersection of arts, culture and community development, comes directly from the communities we serve who are most impacted by the issues Lori just mentioned. And brought some beautiful ideas and solutions to our minds to kind of run over. And I just hope that I can share some of that wisdom and experience with you today. I wanted to also share that since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the most frequent question my team and I have been asked is

how the village in this community is fairing and navigating during time of crisis. And honestly, my answer has been the same every single time. That we are used to it. And you know, the village's mission is to amplify the voices, aspirations, and self determination of hyper marginalized Philadelphia residents. Our home is one of the most disinvested neighborhoods in Philly. Which is saying a lot, if you are familiar with Philadelphia's poverty issues. You know, to kind of give a little more context, our neighborhood has the majority of incomes at less than \$25,000. Versus, you know, 34% of -- I'm sorry. Basically, our neighborhood, everybody, almost everybody, is living somewhere between 30 and 50% AMI. And many people are living below 30% AMI. We are always working to serve individuals who are extremely low income. We don't look at low income the same way affordable housing captures 80% AMI. So today I'm going to share, you know, efforts with you that that while they may be redoubled in this moment, are certainly not new to us. But you know, we are constantly, constantly looking to expand to learn to be as nimble as possible. Really to be as responsive as we can to the needs of our neighbors, our community members. So I'm going to talk a lot today about our work to establish to maintain trust

consistency and boldness in both people and place. For us, these three areas are what the way we filter everything we do. We are looking at our work now through the lens of a hundred years.

Everything we do, we ask ourselves to look a hundred years back at what has come before and a hundred years into the future as to look at what may come of the decisions we are making today.

We know that trust consistency and boldness are critical to creating a culture of safety.

People are working side by side, artists, urban planners, community members, children, elders, to create this culture of safety and in a tiny little corner of the world in modeling really what can happen when collective efficacy takes form.

When we talk about safety, we talk about people feeling physically safe, emotionally safe. So self efficacy, focus, self-esteem, curiosity, everything we know is powerful at demonstrating and achieving.

We talk about social safety, right?

We talk about moral safety. And moral safety starts with us.

Starts with the work we do every single day as a group of individuals stewarding a long legacy of trusted relationships. Making sure that we operate from our values at all times. Making sure we are clear on what our values are. Making sure we communicate those to our partners, to our funders, to all of you.

And so today our work is about learning and building a culture of

safety over and over and over again.

We have three areas we work in.

We work at building civic power.

We have programs like people's paper co-op that are supporting women and reentry and are designing ways that women in reentry can actually design and enact the policy that is necessary to bring women back into the communities where they can be the people who are making sure their community is safe during health crises like this.

We model equitable revitalization.

Whether that's housing, or you know, taking over purchasing a public safety or crime, or safety in the a building in the middle of a crime hot spot. And how to not replicate the types of financial models and usages that we do not want to see happening elsewhere.

We look to the land, our young people are learning how to, learning about appropriate technology at age 9.

They are teaching us about perma culture. They are feeding each other. They are at our food distribution sites giving out fresh vegetables right now. They are quickly mobilized to action because they understand their connection to their neighborhood to their city, and to their world.

And we nurture youth leadership.

We are preparing these young people to make the changes we need to see happening now. And we are preparing them to be able to advocate for themselves. Because as we are looking at the way

environmentally, socially, politically, we are becoming less and less capable of doing that work. We need them to be ready.

So during COVID-19, trust consistency and boldness looks like certainty, stability and joy.

When the middle of March came around, we knew that though our building was going, well we have many, many buildings, that village stewards about 4 1/2 acres of land with buildings, art parks, et cetera in nestled within the commercial fabric of the neighborhood. So though our facilities would be closed, we knew we were on deck. We we were ready to go immediately with emergency responses and adaptation to make sure that the programs we had were going to be able to continue and support people in the way we had always supported them. We knew that our neighbors needed certainty. There was so much information flying around that to be able to translate that in realtime to be able to hear something on food distribution site and myth bust that immediately on a poster or on cards that people can give out to each other because they dpt know how it answer the questions that people were asking, that was vital to being able to get people rolling and get people into the systems and resources that were being designed for them.

We knew people needed stability. They needed money. And they needed food. And they didn't really need us to tell them what to buy

with their money. Right?

Or whether or not they needed vegetables or they needed fruit or they needed dry goods. They needed things to be available to them and they needed that to sort of, you know, create some level of stability so they can think about what else was going to be necessary to take care of them selves and their families. And they needed joy.

You know, our young people needed to still see us bringing creativity to what we were doing as a form of inspiration and as a form of care and as a form of safety. Our food distribution sites did not need to be just that. They needed to be, you know, a socially distanced party with artwork and music, right? And conversation.

So if you take a look at just the corner building of the village during COVID, you don't see a clinical social service site. You see a beautiful vibrant space where artists have come together and created, taken the messages, coming from the people in our neighborhood and translated them into beautiful artwork, beautiful posters that are all over our city.

And you see community members kind of small in here, but you see them out there, lots of people there, to welcome you into an experience that usually, you know, can make people feel even more depressed.

It can seem demeaning. It can seem embarrassing.

For us, you know, consistent certainty and stability looked like

bringing our women, our fellows, in people's paper co-op, formerly incarcerated women to come together to write an op-ed, help society understand what it is like to cope with isolation. Because this is isn't new for most people who are living either in incarceration or away from people who are incarcerated, a form of isolation and loss. Right?

And in neighborhoods that are isolated from resources. So how do we actually lift those voices up and actually let them tell the world how to cope with crisis?

And we fight even harder than normal for justice. Right? We become allies to campaigns that are going on. We work with them every single year. This year we went harder than ever and were able to raise almost \$90,000 to bail mothers out during mothers day. We were not alone. There were a lot of people working on this campaign this year. The young people at the village and across the city are now working with the villages convening consortium of groups and young people to design a two-year campaign to end youth incarceration in Philadelphia. That kicked off unbelievably I during COVID.

We got out there and we put some of our neighbors who we know can build things really well. And we put them to work and got money in their pockets to build information stations. People need analog information. And so we went out and made sure these stations were in

the five most trafficked areas of the neighborhood. And were constantly rotating content. I wish I had a picture now. We added some really beautiful artwork to it and people have started to contribute their own messages as well.

And we supported the artists who have helped keep the village alive for many, many, many decades.

These are the artists that work with the policy makers. That work with the young people. That work with all kinds of designers to do art space community development work.

That makes a difference in our neighborhood and across the city.

Very quickly knowing that funds would, you know, in particular philanthropy would have a difficult time, and did at first, getting money into people's pockets, we got ourselves together and we were very small operation just so you know.

We're not like, we are a very small organization.

But we got ourselves together to raise some initial funds. We started with \$20,000. We were able in the end to raise \$160,000 to fund all 340-something, my numbers I'm sure are wrong, black artists residing in Philadelphia with \$500 gap grants, emergency gap funds. We created a very simple application. This was acknowledgment that this issue, they were going to be facing of not being able to support their creative practice. Not being able to service society in the way that they have to make their money from doing what they love was

going to endure for a long period of time. Our goal was not to solve it. Our goal was to help them through that month or the next month and the response to this is we also very much wanted to prove again that is it our job, our role, we shouldn't have the power to decide what people need. We should be there to recognize when they tell us there is a gap. There is something missing that's essential and we should step in when we can, especially when we have power to fill that gap and let them show us why it was necessary. Right? We are talking low risk, right? We are talking \$160,000. \$500 a person. That's a risk we can take.

And so we were able to demonstrate that and it was very powerful for a lot of Philadelphia philanthropy and it was very powerful for the artists.

And so I wanted to just, and those are just a few examples, obviously we are doing a lot, we have core programs that have been, you know, adopted to COVID and we are really full speed ahead and I also want to mention that all of this has occurred while there has been relentless layers of crises in the neighborhood whether it is an uptick in already serious violent crime. In an area where crime is 12 times higher, violent crime, in our neighborhood than the rest of the city. It has gotten worse. Where our commercial corridor was literally burned down and destroyed during the uprising. There was a five-alarm

fire the week after along the corridor. It's been layer upon layer upon everyday trauma from economic violence. And so again, this is our work. It is what we were built for. It is not easy.

And that doesn't mean that it is easy. And it also doesn't mean it should be normalized or it is okay.

But my ask, if I could be so bold as to ask for something from all of you, and this is for looking at people who are part of sort of the driving power behind the policies and focus areas that bring funding and resources into communities like ours.

You know, we really believe that in order to respond to this type of work you have to see it and feel it. You have to get close to it and you cannot be in Harrisburg, in your office. You can't be, and for most people that's not their choice. So this what has to be an ask of the whole system, to get us out into the field. By doing that, that is how we can begin to build trust among our network. And it is how everyone can better support consistency. Can see programs like Lori's. Can see successes and say, that cannot go away. Not on my watch. I will make sure if it is not my resources, it someone else's, that that will stay. And to invest in boldness, to invest in the new ideas or in what already existed in communities that helps to build safe places.

Right in the nontraditional.

Alternatives to policing.

Alternatives to education. That work every single day to invest in those things because they are bold. It is bold to do that work when you are putting pennies together.

And I think, you know, if we can begin to do that, we can begin to build the muscle in the networks that are needed to kind of, you know, sit in between the crisis flash points and build capacity. So with that, I think that's all for me.

Thank you so much for letting me share with you. I really deeply appreciate it.

>> Thank you, Aviva. And thank you, Lori. We are now going to move into question and answer period.

We have about 10 minutes for this.

Thank you to those of you who have sent questions via chat. I really appreciate it. If you have a question for Lori or Aviva and it doesn't get answered today, I will follow up with them via e-mail afterwards. And make sure that I can get you an answer for that.

First question I have is for Lori.

This is from Huran. She would love to hear about how agencies can help seed these ideas and set up grant programs. Any great ways for organizations to come together and think about your ideas and how it might all work in a social distancing setting besides just the on-line option.

>> Those are great questions.

I feel like it is interesting to think about the state organizations and some of the times it's been really helpful with different

kinds of foundations to have even small -- g[Inaudible]

So there may be interesting ways to partner with grantees. And it wouldn't have to be a SERC. It could be some other productive fiction that they would like to do. But there are ways that providing some mini grants or providing support for grantees, making sure they have the manual like if they wanted to do a SERC, walk them through a community engagement process, to thinking about what it means to address a social emergency in a diverse population. And with folks who are experiencing social emergency deeply and painfully but also ready to step up and lead, right? That's where the metaphor falls down, right? Not about us providing emergency response sent are because you were hit bay tornado. It is about you coming together to create a social response center. I do think the question about how to did it right now, I think we are in the process of learning how do we take what is beautiful that artists and communities have taken on-line and how to take some of the advantages, we have heard from folks with disabilities and mental health issues expressing sometimes how much they enjoy attending events from their homes. There are things to do on-line for people that aren't necessarily coming to our events. That's exciting. We have been able to think about social merge enswi folks experiencing in other parts of the world. That's

exciting. I think those can really bring together insights and artists and folks from all different corners of the world.

One of the other things, and I'm going on a little bit here, because we have been in the middle of grappling with this and we think of the virtual SERC is thinking about ways that in realtime we might be together but we aren't all sitting here talking to each other. We have done selective cooking. We are zooming from kitchens and are sharing cultural dishes that have to do with rice. Or we are Zooming from our work stations and making mini zones. We are talking about cooking and eating together, healing together in ways that echo some of the things that we have seen even if we are not together in realtime.

>> Thank you, Lori.

Aviva, I have one for you.

You emphasize trust building.

What is your advice for cultivating that trust and being worthy of trust?

You're still muted.

>> All right. I would say showing up over and over and over again. And I think sometimes it feels like kind of beating a dead horse to say this.

But listening.

You know, I think listening doesn't stop with when the conversation is over. You know, the community members we work with know we have listened when we respond and when we respond appropriately.

So you know, that often means taking risks. And putting ourselves in a position to kind of take the blow of something to go out on a limb or to work extra hard to support an idea that a neighbor has immediately instead of waiting until we have funding for it. So a lot of, I think, trust is sometimes maintained by being comfortable building the plane while flying it. And you know, I also believe that you can't have trust, again, without consistency and not just the showing up of the individuals but making sure that organizations, programs, efforts, endure.

And so there's different ways that trust can be supported from all levels of nonprofit infrastructure.

Great. Thank you, Aviva. That's great. I think you nailed it from my perspective. So Lori, I have another question about SERCs for you. This is more nuts and bolts. Emily from Oregon folk life is wondering about the funding. Who staffs it, programs it, keeps the lights on. How do you keep that functioning?

>> The SERC is really a pop-up infrastructure that communities create. They range from a weekend to a week to ten days. They are hosted by an organization that either a partner of ours or an organization or set of folks in another community that want to do a SERC often times in partnership with folks they've been deeply in relationship with in their community. In terms of funding, you know,

funding is always a question.

Interestingly, our first SERC first created by place making grants. We were doing creative place making in our community along a commuter rail line that goes through Dorchester and Boston. So we of course wanted to host the first SERC in our community and it meant we could use some of that money to fund a lot of the artists and work that we did there.

We also got support an amazing activist, Mohamed, to do SERCs in little rock and rural Arkansas and in utica, Mississippi. So we were able to be a conduit and put that money into someone else's hands that was really familiar with communities that we weren't. So it is, you you know, I think being creative there are a lot of communities that sent a kit for free. And like Aviva said, before we have money, we today put this in people's hands. An all volunteer force to create the manual and create the kit. And any time someone wanted it, we didn't charge. We just sent it so they felt they had the tools to make it happen. The rest of it is beyond relationships and trust.

>> Thank you. That actually rolls right into another question I have. This one is for both Lori and Aviva.

We will let Aviva answer first and then Lori, you can chime in. The artists you engage or people with community based work receive guidance or training with trauma tied populations before working with

them?

>> That's a great question.

We do internally, we actually are very lucky to have one of the city's leading trainers in art space trauma informed practice. Michael O'Brien. He is our director of learning. And so we have really formalized our own processes and practices around that work. And our own internal professional development includes training in various ways of working with populations, hyper marginalized populations who have experienced a variety of inter generational trauma. Our artists, when we work with artists, there are very few people we work with on a short term basis.

We believe that, you know, artists work best in these settings when they have long stays.

So we are able then to kind of wrap those artists into our trainings, make sure that they are having one on one conversations, and also build in additional social supports from experts who do the kind of work that we do not do. We aren't social workers. We are not clinical, clinically trained, and can do more damage because we are not.

So we try to wrap that into the programs as well and have had a lot of luck with that. What about you, Lori?

>> That sounds amazing.

I can't say that we have had that capacity. I think our approach has primarily been to work with community organizers, artists,

activists, who are already deeply in relationship with the communities we are working in, whether local or working in communities in other parts and partners with theirs. But I do know, one of the things we had to be very intentional about, when we were designing our first SERC we were designing the SERC thinking Hillary Clinton would win and we wanted people to understand we were still in a social emergency. Then she lost. A lot of folks who had not been experiencing the social emergency, a lot of artists, particularly white middle class artists, came to our open volunteer sessions because they wanted to be able to offer something and we appreciated that. But we knew when we created the SERC that they could not be the face of the SERC. When we started programming the SERC we went back to our partners in the communities and said would you still offer your high-energy dance class, will you cook your amazing jerk chicken. Will you lead some drumming. And other artists not from these communities were able to help us in a have right-of-ways. Like Aviva says, she is in a long term relationship with folks. We couldn't get folks to say, we couldn't get them up to speed for that in a way it just didn't make sense. It would fall back on, we are okay, but you're not. And that's not what we are saying.

>> I wanted to just also kind of add that a lot of the work that we

do is done when we do it well is because we have multiple sectors represented.

And because we have multiple sort of perspective represented. And so just by doing that, there's often, we are creating safer spaces where you know, community members, community leaders are present to be able to bring a different lens to the overall conversation. For example, we are currently piloting the second or designing Philadelphia's second participatory youth defense hub. So this is a space where public defenders, artists, young people, and their families, come together and design a collaborative defense that better represents or humanizes the young person and circumstances that took place. And really it is formalizing a process that we've been, you know, we and other people have been doing forever. When a pastor testifies as to the character of a young person. When we write letters on behalf of the women who are trying to get off probation in our programs. And you know, this is basically taking that and actually making it a concrete accessible service. And so for us, what was necessary is to not just have those groups but to have peer counselors present. Because having those conversations designing that, you know, collective defense or collaborative defense also brings up a lot of family trauma. A lot of, you know, stories and issues of, you know, I'm in this situation buzz my father is

incarcerated. All of these things that you just, at that really critical, and talk about crisis, when these young people are in crisis and at that moment the best thing we can do is surround them by a network of people who can support them. And you know, for us, then we have artists who get to witness that. The artists working with younger people to create social biomedial kits. Basically like video photography. Poetry. You know, that supports their whole essence in front of a judge. You know, that conversation has to happen with multiple disciplines that deal with trauma as a whole. So just another example.

>> Thank you.

>> Unfortunately we are going to, or not unfortunately, because I'm looking forward to the second part of this session as well, we are going to shift to hear a bit from our agency folks.

But I want to thank Aviva and Lori. This was great first 45, 55 minutes, of this session. I really appreciate it. I hope you will stick around and interact as we continue forward.

>> Thank you.

>> Thank you.

As we continue forward, the second half of the session will be your agency peers in a roundtable discussion. That is going to be headed up by the chair of the California arts council. She will be moderating with Margaret Hunt. Freddy Velez.

And Susan DuPlessis.

I don't want you to think that your role is done, everyone out there. If you have questions or comments that you would like inserted in this moderated conversation, please shoot them over chat. I will be watching chat and plugging them in when there is time and availability. So I will turn things over. You're still muted.

>> Thank you be Eric and Aviva and Lori for your presentations. Very inspiring. Aviva, I was part of the artist consortium many years ago when Arthur hall had this vision an artist community. It is just wonderful to see it has come to fruition.

I have a lot of questions for you about that.

But I won't ask you about them right now.

But I do want to talk about the fact that art gives us a sense of common purpose and on that note, in regards to a very dear friend who just passed away, Chad wick Bozeman, that was one of his messages that art gives us purpose. And even though Chadwick had celebrity and success that most artists really dream of, he was still focused on looking back at the community and giving and making contributions and working on social justice issues.

And I think that he would be very pleased to see this kind of work coming out.

And we know that art is at the center of community healing and what it means to me coming from California is, I think very similar to

what it means to all of us, and given the fact that with dealing with these dual pandemics, it is very, very important to look to the artists for direction, for healing, for artists coming through a second responders and recovery et cetera. So having said that, I would just like to talk about how you guys nurture resilience in your state arts agencies in your states. How do we use arts and connect with communities to ensure the resilience and ensure that we empower the artists. Anybody?

>> I will just jump in quickly.

This is Susan DuPlessis from the arts commission in South Carolina. It is a pleasure to be with all of you today from wherever you are coming from. I'm in Columbia, South Carolina. I just want to do a big shoutout to the presenters that we just heard. Really valuable and lots of concepts that really resonate with some of the ways that we are working at our state arts agency.

In South Carolina. I think that one of the key things was the idea of being in deep relationship with the people that we're serving.

And creating platforms for that to be able to happen and also one of the things that resonated with me, Aviva, is about the staying power. So being approximate to the people we are serving, being close to those people. And understanding that there is a mutuality.

There is learning that happens on both sides of this equation. And having a kind of staying power. We have a program I'll just quickly mention called the art of community rural SE. I have my trustee brochure right here. And we are working with people who we call mavens who are key connectors in our state. And 14 counties and one tribal nation. And we have been working with them going on five years in some cases. And so the idea of being in deep relationship with people for a while, not just jumping in and jumping out or funding a project that happens in the course of a year and you're gone, but understanding the commitment that we make and the value and learning over time with each other, that ultimately will build a new story of who we are in our state and the relevance of arts and culture in our state.

>> Well, I just want to say this for us here in California, we have framework that I think is important and helps us connect more with the community that we have artist answers communities programs and creative place making grant programs et cetera. One is that you have to understand what your communities need and don't assume. And I think is very important this whole notion of for us, by us. That we incorporate the community's voice in all of the work that we do.

This has been a real challenge for us because there are some voices that they don't think their voices are important. Also, I think it

is very important for us to examine our decision making in our biases. I think that given COVID and all of the various things that have come up in the last six months, we have to all realize that we do have certain biases and that there are certain people who are in power who are going to have to relinquish some of the power in order for us to get to the foundational power that art has to change our communities because that's kind of all we have right now. We are getting a lot of mixed messages and part of what we are up against is contradictory messages going out from our so-called leadership that really kind of undermines this work. And I think that it is up to the artist on some level to bring the public's attention to what they can do creatively to counteract these messages.

Focus on equity. This was a big piece for us in California. The service, according to the need to prioritize racial equity, and to really emphasize that word racial equity because if there is no racial equity, then the equity piece is impotent, frankly, I believe. And is very important for representation and visibility to come through all groups. And in response to the pandemic for us, we move quickly, like many of you have mentioned. You put the money out there as quickly as you could because people have that need. And frankly, I think none of us realize that at the beginning of the process we will

be in September talking about what the needs of the communities are and in the emergency relief needs that they are. So that we can't even get to point of talking about recovery until we really help people make sure they are surviving. That doesn't just mean artists to continue the creative process and practices. And it also means surviving like buying food, paying rent with paying your phone bill, those kinds of things that are necessary. So we have been able to try to be as flexible as possible in our funding so that artists and arts organizations could use the moneys we were able to get out to them in whatever way they felt they needed to use it. And again, we are also looking at policy changes.

And so in that regard, I'm just wondering, aside from the wonderful programs that you guys are doing, I'm thrilled with this SERC idea. And it is interesting because in Kinosh, Wisconsin this week, it looks like they have incorporated or engaged in a certain kind of SERC program to help heal that community because they aren't getting it from the leadership and it is very frankly to me frightening that we are hearing from our leadership that, well, frankly, an authoritarian fascistic way of dealing with the community problems as opposed to something more creative. So I'm just wondering, from you guys, from the SERC programs. What kinds of, how do you see

moving forward in the future, like what kind of funding are you looking at? What other kinds of support systems are you looking at the? Anybody?

>> Yeah. Me. It's Freddy from Puerto Rico.

Thank you, Nasha. Thank you, Eric, Lori, Aviva, Susan. I'm Freddy Velez, deputy director. It was founded in 1955. The agency to protect and enhance and promote the the culture and values of the Puerto Rican people. This makes incentives, initiatives. We would like to thank NASAA for inviting us. A small state agency with very difficult three years to give you an idea we started with economic difficulties our volume caught by 75% operating budget for the last three years. We went through a hurricane Irma and Maria cat 5 in 2017, September. Then we had health breaks in December 2019. And beginning of this year. And then we were going through the pandemic, COVID 16. We have lock down on March 16. I think we are the earliest jurisdiction in the nation to have a total lock down for COVID-19. So that gives you an idea how difficult it has been the last three or four years for the whole population, especially for the artistic community for the cultural community. We see a disasters as a way of upbringing opportunity. Let me explain myself. We have gone through hurricanes, earthquakes, pandemics. We see an opportunity in every event. We

prepare for the worst and hope for the best.

If anyone says you are prepared for the worst, that's not true. You are never prepared. We were total black out for three months after the hurricane. There were people for a whole year without power. So that's a major difficulty in terms of the community. We started with a couple of initiatives. And one of them was cultural and it was showcased as flashes of inspiration and I think in Baltimore, and basically community outreach program and joined in with artists and at the beginning they were all volunteers.

But we realized that it was, you know, not going to work in terms of getting to the community, so we decided to finance to give them in order to make them the whole program work. We run that program for almost a year and has become an initiative funded by national endowment of the arts. I would like to present, after any disaster, you have to realize that change has to occur in order to survive. And we have written down a couple of notes and I think there is a couple of stages in that response first and surviving. And if you have any -- if you don't have any power, if you don't have any communication, if you are not able to get out from your house is house, first survive, then recovery stage, preparedness and resiliency.

And I think we have gone through all of them. Those stages without

realizing that we have gone through and changes have to occur in order to survive, to recover, to prepare and be resilient. And I think, as the state agency, we have to really find our role and we have to define our role in order to revise our many we were lucky that we were riding the strategic plan before the hurricane Maria. So it was postponed for a couple of months. And then we came back with the strategic plan. We added one main section, preparedness and resiliency. And that's now strategic plan. We are able to use it for the earthquake stages and for the COVID-19 stages.

You have to revise your procedures. Cut red tape. There is no way can you survive without cutting red tape. Even that you have to comply with state law and federal law but there are certain things that you have to rethink how you have been doing things and going back to the drawing board. After hurricane Maria we were able to issue checks. Yes, paper checks. We didn't have any power. So we went to the bank. They open one of the branches in old San Juan and we asked them for paper checks. And we, after three weeks, we were able to pay all of our hourlyies with paper checks. And we coordinated with that local branch and they honor those checks. So you have to think out of the box in order to response, your response has to be on time and efficient p. It is not efficient, it doesn't

work. If not on time, it wouldn't work either. Why? Because the need is right now is not two month from now. Not a year from now. It is right now.

That is the example of issuing hand-written checks. Paper checks. Because they needed the money then. Not two or three or five, six, seven weeks after that.

So basically, I would like to thank NASAA for allowing us to share our thoughts. And our ideas in terms of how to be resilient. Thank you.

>> Thank you very much, Freddy.

And I just want to say that as a member of NASAA, when I think some of the first hit Puerto Rico, and NASAA and by your group of people who came, your delegates who came to the NASAA conference anyway, performed, sang and gave all of us hope. Not only for you guys but for all of us and I have to say, I am so disappointed that our next NASAA leadership convention will not be held in Puerto Rico. I was looking forward to coming and saying the work you all are doing there. I would like to also just pose to you all, how you are listening. I'm seeing questions from people and they are asking questions about how engaged and empowered marginalized communities through grant programs. For the California arts council, one of the ways we have done that in the past has been through pro programs like cultural pathways where we literally in the grant guidelines said the grant was

available to recent immigrants, refugees, tribal communities, and indigenous communities. Like specifically written into the grant guidelines.

Those guidelines may or may not change as we move forward.

But that's one example of how we reached out to groups. Also community listening sessions. I'm just wondering among our group here, how do you engage these marginalized communities and make them feel empowered.

>> I will take a shot at that.

This is Margaret Hunt from Colorado. I just want to go to the thought about being prepared.

Trs.

We have always set aside unallocated money in our budget to respond to to crises or opportunities or threats. I'm so grateful now that we had the foresight to do that because this past couple of years we have been able to partner with other funders. And create grant called arts and society grant? A grant-making program that fosters this cross section work at this integration of arts and critical social and community needs. It is a two-year grant. And applicants can receive up to \$50,000. They do prioritize underserved communities. And tribal members. People of color. And just to give you a couple of examples. And of some things that we have been able to fund. So in this small tiny town, which is on the southern end of Colorado,

between near the four corners area, it is the entry point to a Mesa Verde National Park. If any of you have been there, you may have visited that place.

But they were very committed to developing authentic and deep connections with members of the tribal community especially the Navajo nation. That was really so devastated by COVID-19, which some of you have probably very aware of.

And so they are dealing with issues of community health and tribal members and hiring tribal artists to be responsive. And to support them as their next door neighbors. Which is really pretty phenomenal.

We have seen projects, cross sector projects around clean water, around the environment. And immigration. Undocumented voices. Social injustice, corrections,

and some of the applicants have been, you know, are Colorado department of public health partnering with arts organizations and artists to collaborate on projects.

Local law enforcement partnering with a theater company to give voice to ism grants and undocumented people. And they would write their personal story through a story writing seminar and webinars. And then the law enforcement officer would get up on stage next to the person and read their story outloud.

It was just the most amazing interaction between law enforcement and people who felt they had to hide from the law, right? Very powerful work. And so, so for us, what this

has really precipitated is we now do weekly calls with our cultural partners. Our cultural partners being funders of the arts in our state. So philanthropy. Colorado health foundation.

Colorado business committee for the arts. So we have identified the organizations that are really committed to this work. And we are cocreating together.

So but I think it was our ability to have unallocated money in our budget that we deliberately set aside in a fund. Every year. To be responsive to critical community needs. That really made a difference for pups we have perfected the art of the work-around. Because our state finance and accounting system is so cumbersome and slow, we are now providing funding to nonprofit arts organizations to be our granting agency in some cases.

Particularly around crisis issues like artist relief fund, Colorado music relief fund, arts and society grants.

Because they literally can, and just like you were talking about paper checks, they literally can review an application, write out the check, and here is the interesting thing they do. They make a personal phone call to every applicant to tell them congratulations. You just approved a grant for you. And the most touching thing I've witnessed is that this is an individual artist who had been out of work for a couple of months and worried about providing food on the table for his children. When he got the

phone call who said we have approved a grant for you from the artist relief fund, he said, I don't need it any more. I just got a job at Costco stocking shelves. So I'm okay, give it to someone else who needs it more than I do. So there's this human connection that weaves established. And so I think it is just that personal outreach. We are all working remotely. Have been since the first part of March. But our cell phone numbers are available on every communication we send out. It is not unusual for us to take phone calls from constituents at 10:00 on a Friday night. It is that being available and accessible that has taught us a lot. It has been very humbling. It helped us reimagine entirely how we are doing our work. And I think it is a game changer for us. In terms of how we go forward. Being better stewards of our communities and the people in our communities.

>> Thank you for that. I have to confer that California arts council, we have the kinds of funding yet, hopefully we will, eventually, to set aside money we can allocate for those kinds of emergencies. But we did get some funding a few years ago that was one-time funding. We decided to put some of it aside because we were able to get three years to spend the money and it really made a difference at this moment in time. We were able to fund a program showing the intersection between art and technology and art and health which was, you

know, so cogent for this time and also to put money out there for relief funds. Had we not put that money aside, we may not have been able to do what we were able to do and engage another organization that could get the money out of the door faster. Like you said, we wanted to move the money quickly and we were able to do that because of you know government bureaucracy can hold that up for months. Even though have you given the grant and they have been approved and all of that, the landlord does not wait. The groceries have to be paid for. And so we were able to do something very similar. And I'm just wondering, among our group here, how do you think about engaging. I think the other piece of this is a public-private partnership. And how you engage the private partnerships. I think as we move forward the funding will be a little wonky, frankly, because of COVID. Because of the economic impact.

Of the virus.

How do we engage the private sector to be more involved? I know that you mentioned in Colorado, how you all have these business interests in whose interest is in the arts. Does anyone else have something similar that you are engaging in? In order to get that additional funding.

>> Is Susan from South Carolina.

And I would say that everything we are talking about today in terms of crisis, we have been in crisis

for a long time and the moment for creative thinking is, you know, it is a moment whose time has come. If it is not already there, it certainly is now.

And one of the values of doing work in place making, call it creative place-making, whatever you will, is looking at the partnerships that can evolve and other funding the role of arts and culture inside of other sectors as a useful tool and as way it build engagement. I think that has been part of what we are doing here in South Carolina. We view our partners who are mavens on the ground and there are several we invited who are on this call today. So I say a special shout out to them.

But this is about creative thinking. And working differently. And the value of partnership that comes from seeing how arts and culture can work inside of an economic development frame or health and well-being frame or education frame, these are all challenges that we all have wherever we are. And so I think the words that come to me that I especially want to shout out right now are resilience, flexibility and relevance. And so being, as part of an operation, and I know some of us have more agency within our agencies to make, to approach work differently. And I'm really, I just want to do a shout out to South Carolina arts commission and its leadership and board for that kind of agency that we have been able to work differently to really

connect with people in various parts of our state. To make real change, positive change. And so Eric, I just wanted to quickly show a couple of images that happened in Alandale South Carolina that shows the what the commission arts group has, a grant for creative place making, but in the midst of the COVID crisis, we gave our grantees the opportunity to retro fit what they had said they were going to do into more of the context that we were living. And to make something more relevant. So this is a thank you mural that was done in Alandale, South Carolina. Eric, if you will show the hometown heros. Maven and team, this is part of the celebration that happened in June to celebrate hometown heros, who were the front line workers of the small town of about 2,000 in South Carolina. So each letter, a frank you, shows a different kind of hometown hero. And then Eric, if you will show the next picture, and those are the hometown heros. They went around the community and you should have gotten another e-mail, Eric, that has the hometown heros in it. If you didn't, this team went around the community, they took pictures of the retail clerks, from the grocery stores, from the school district, people who were still having to good to work. Having to be those people who were the front lines. And this was their way of saying, thank you. And they had a very appropriate socially distanced celebration of the

people who were really helping to continue to make their community work. So I think there are multiple ways to tell the story but from the state arts commission point of view, this is a way we, you know, we allowed, if you will, that kind of flexibility in the grant making to, yes, please, be relevant.

Please don't sit on this money and ask for an extension. People and places are in crisis. How can we support local communities, celebrate them and get money out to people who need it. So that's my shoutout to Alandale, South Carolina and how we are doing it differently in South Carolina. Thank you. I just wanted to squeeze that in.

>> I don't know what our time is like, Eric. I'm glancing at the clock but I'm thinking about one other question I have for everyone here, which is as I look around, as I look at the people who are engaged in this process, that we are doing right now and even going to for example, a NASAA conference, what I notice is that it is overwhelmingly white.

And I'm wondering, what are the state arts agencies doing in order to build the leadership that expands it to include, to be more inclusive of people of color. To be more inclusive of native communities. Of being more inclusive of recent immigrants, et cetera.

And in California arts council we just recently in fact just launching a grant program that we did actually in partnership with the

Irvine foundation which is going out of the arts business, a fellowship program for emerging arts leaders of color. So that we have training, on the ground training, for people in museums. In arts agencies. In other kinds of cultural institutions that more accurately reflect the population. I'm you just wondering if anyone else has any kind of program that is aimed on working on building that leadership.

>> I'm in New Jersey. New Jersey state council of the arts. We partnered with an internship program, which is just for 30 years just in New York, and now the past two years they are expanding it for building leaders of color and placing them in institutions. This year, virtual, unfortunately. But it has given us the opportunity to connect interns to really strong organizations in New Jersey where they've had a chance to contribute and learn and they also come together as a cohort and learn together as well.

And I think they are at least before COVID they were, you know, each year they are trying to expand it. So it may be an opportunity for other states.

>> I know that Pennsylvania had a program called fellowship for internship enterprises. I think that's wh it was called. I was in the pilot group of the program. It impacted my career in the arts from moving from visual arts and being a teacher to part of the administrative piece. However it was not focused on people of color.

I just happened to be one of two people who participated in that fellowship program. The program that the California arts council has, thank God for Irvine, is a fellowship that has, I would say, a working salary in anywhere but California. And it is it \$50,000 a year. But they also get health coverage and in the institutions that bring the fellows in also get a certain amount of money to help offset their costs.

I think it is important because not only in terms of people of color being involved in this, but also, aging population, frankly, and you know, we have to pass the baton. And so I think it is very important to think of that as part of the work we are doing. Because all of the passion and love that all of us have in this work, eventually we work in rockin chairs on someone's back porch smoking a pipe or something. We need to have the young people come behind us and still be able to pass the baton in a by that history, that they get the information and the knowledge and not have to start over again. That is one other. And the other thing I wanted to throw out there is the idea of --

[Inaudible]

I think we are running out of time. So I would like to, are you ready to close, Eric?

>> We are a little bit over.

I hate to interrupt such a great discussion.

But I do want to acknowledge we

are a couple minutes over. I am happy to stay around for a little bit further if you all want to continue on here.

But I want to acknowledge that those feeling awkward about dropping off, you should not feel awkward.

We are running over. I want to thank the opportunity to thank everybody while we still have the majority of you here. Thank you, Nasha, Margaret, Susan, Freddy, Aviva and Lori. This has been great session. Now, go ahead and continue on and we will just stick around until everybody is done.

>> Thank you, everyone. And for those of you presenting. Thank you for all of the hard work you put into this.

Have a great rest of the day.

And I hope to see you all again soon.