

Cultural Arts Funding Review Process Update

ARTS COMMISSION

JUNE 29, 2022

Cultural Funding Review Goal



The desired goal is to **sustain** and **grow** Austin's **cultural infrastructure** so that all may share in the **economic** and **employment** benefits of the heritage preservation and creative sectors, as well as upholding the City's **commitment** to racial **equity** per the City of Austin's Equity Office standards and goals.

Holistic Funding Ecosystem

Nexus

Nurture new and emerging applicants by funding creative public projects developed through community activation and/or collaboration.

Elevate

Creative and administrative expenses of cultural producers that amplify equity and prioritize inclusive programming.

Thrive

Focused investment to sustain and grow arts organizations that are deeply rooted in, and reflective of Austin's diverse cultures.

Pilot Program **Nexus** in Detail

	Nexus
Goal	Encourage new talent
Contract Term	6 Months
Type of Funding	Project Funding Only
Who can apply?	Individuals/ Groups* <small>(*cooperatives, non-profit organizations, businesses, partnerships, etc.)</small>
Selection Process	3 COA Staff + Rubric
Draft Total Available Funds	~\$500,000
Draft Award Amounts	\$5,000
Draft Number of Awardees	100 <i>(50 per cycle; 2 cycles/year)</i>

Nexus Scoring Category	Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points
	Key Constituencies	25
	First-time applicant	10
	Budget	5
	Accessibility & Language Access	15
Operations		55
	Cultural Activities	10
	Creative Collaboration	10
	Community Voice	10
	Programmatic Reach	10
	Community Investment and Relationships	5
Cultural and Social Impact		45

Pilot Program **Elevate** in Detail

	Elevate	
	Elevate (Non-501c)	Elevate+ (501c only)
Goal	Support established cultural producers	
Contract Term	1 year	1 year
Type of Funding	Flexible: Project/Operating	Flexible: Project/Operating
Who can apply?	Artists; Arts/Culture Groups* w/ budgets <\$500k	Arts/Culture 501(c) s only
Selection Process	Panel	Panel
Draft Total Available Funds	~\$1,000,000	~\$3,000,000
Draft Award Amounts	\$10,000 - \$30,000	\$10,000 - \$75,000
Draft Number of Awardees	35	65

Elevate Scoring Category	Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points
	Key Constituencies	15
	History of Service	10
	Cultural Leadership	15
	Community Voice	5
Operations		45
	Cultural Activities	10
	Budget	5
	Programmatic Reach	5
	Relevance and Responsiveness	5
	Inclusion and Intersectionality	5
	Community Relationships	5
	Opportunity creation/ Community benefits	10
	Accessibility	10
Cultural and Social Impact		55

Pilot Program **Thrive** in Detail

	Thrive
Goal	Invest in diverse cultural institutions
Contract Term	2 years
Type of Funding	Flexible: Project/Operating (+Optional Networking/ Coaching/ Classes)
Who can apply?	501(c) only with 5-year operating history in Austin
Selection Process	Panel
Draft Total Available Funds	~\$3,000,000
Draft Award Amounts	\$80,000 - \$150,000
Draft Number of Awardees	35

Thrive Scoring Categories	Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points
	Mission and Key Constituencies	15
	History of Service	15
	Cultural Leadership	30
Operations		60
	Cultural Activities Relevance and Responsiveness	10
	Intersectionality	5
	Community Relationships	5
	Opportunity creation/ Community benefits	5
	Accessibility	5
	Cultural Institution Status	10
Cultural and Social Impact		40

Pilot Programs Solutions



OPEN TO
EVERYONE



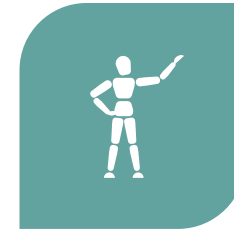
NO MATCHING
FUNDS



AWARD NOT
BASED ON
EXISTING BUDGET



COMPETITIVE
PROCESS



TRANSITION PLAN

Target Concern: Support



How are you supporting applicants?

- Workshops and videos
- Materials (application checklist)
- Increased open office hours
- Community Navigator Program

Target Concern: Fiscal Sponsorship



Why are you getting rid of Fiscal Sponsorship?

- We are not!
- It is **optional** for increased flexibility.
- Applicant can decide what is best for them.

Target Concern: Thrive Expenses



Why are capital expenditures eligible?

- Practice not Policy
- Assets = sustainability and growth
- e.g. equipment purchases like lighting arrays, black box curtains, museum display cases
- Must get pre-approval from staff for expenses >\$2,000

Target Concern: Location



Why are non-Austinites able to apply for funding?

- Affordability of Austin
- All HOT-programs are moving to MSA
- Even if someone lives or is based in the surrounding MSA, the **activities** receiving HOT funds must take place in Austin

Target Concern: Production Eligibility



Why can an organization get funding when 49% of their activities aren't even in Austin?

- Organization might have more in their portfolio than just HOT-funded activities.
- For example, a dance organization goes on a National tour performing and running master classes for five months out of the year. Since they are in Austin the other seven months, they are eligible to apply for funding.
- 100% of HOT-funded activities must be in Austin.

Target Concern: Creative Businesses



Why are "creative businesses" eligible for funds?

- Non-501cs are only eligible for Nexus & Elevate at lower award levels (~ \$1.5m; 20% of available \$)
- Non-501cs can apply with or without a Fiscal Sponsor.
- A non-501c art group must have a budget under \$500k
- This would include LLCs, unincorporated groups, State of Texas non profits and other business structures that encompass galleries, improv troupes, dance companies, artist collectives, etc.

Target Concern: Creative Businesses

Eliminating business structure flexibility of non-501cs would cut out many prior cultural contractors, such as:

3240 Entertainment; A'lante Flamenco Dance Ensemble; AllRhythms; Almost Real Things; AM Arts; Antumbrae Intermedia Events + Installations; Art of the Pot; Articulate Choreographic Series; Artisan Mercado; ARTWITHAKIRASH STUDIO LLC.; Asian American Community Partnership; Atelier Dojo; Artistic Education Company; Austin Bike Zoo; Austin Children's Theater; Austin Conjunto Festival; JWHill Productions; Austin Flamenco Academy; Austin Jewish Film Festival; Austin Maker Group; Austin Metro Drug-Free Coalition Media Project; Austin Music Video Festival; Austin Sketch Fest; Austin Tinkering School; Austin Troubadours; Back 2 School; Balcones Community Orchestra; Batik By Design; Beerthoven; BoCCa; Blue Cow Studio; Cage Match Project; Capital T Theatre; Central Texas Medical Orchestra; Children's Book Project II; Contrast Film Festival; COTFG; Cut and Deliver; dadageek; Density512; Elephant Keeper; Epistrophy Arts; Ethos; Film Kids; Gathering Ground Theatre; Gender Portraits; Generic Ensemble Company; Glass Half Full Theatre; Grapes of Wrath 75 Project; Greater Tomorrow Youth Art Program (GTYAP); HIVE Arts Collective; Home Street Music; Honky Tonk Holiday; Hyperreal Film Club; IMMEDIATE Fashion School; ImprovEd Arts; IRL; Jason Phelps & Co.; Los Bohemios Perdidos; Make Every Media; Minor Mishap Marching Band; Voices of the Middle East; Montopolis Productions; Mother Falcon Music Lab; Northern-Southern; Not Just Oom-Pah!; One Ounce Opera; Other Worlds Film Fest; Outside Voice; paper chairs; Paper Connections; Present Company Theatre; Project ATX6; Proyecto Teatro; Rattletree; The Sister Moses Project; Rolling Ryot; Roots & Rhythms; Shay Ishii Dance Company; Shrewd Productions; Silent Films Out Loud; Sky Candy; Song Rise Arts; Soul Note Series; Storybook Studio; Tetractys; Texas Comedies; The Institution Theater; The Love of China; The Mall; Theatre en Bloc; Touch Collective; Transform Film Festival; Trouble Puppet Theater; Twin Alchemy Collective; UpRise Productions; Vision Gland

Target Concern: Evaluation



How are you evaluating success of Pilots?

- Qualitative and Quantitative metrics
- **Place:** Dashboard and interactive map of investments
- **People:** More diverse applicant pool, awardees, panelists, audiences and artists
- **Programs:** self-determined goal setting/achieved; cohort/training satisfaction; equity plans in place
- **Process:** Ease of application; simplified contracting process; faster payments; more 1:1 attention from staff

Target Concern: Review Panels

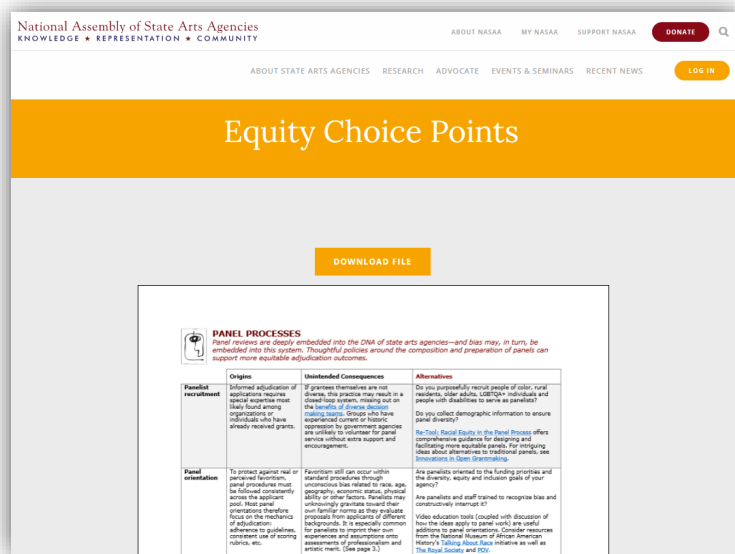


How are you improving the Panel Review process?

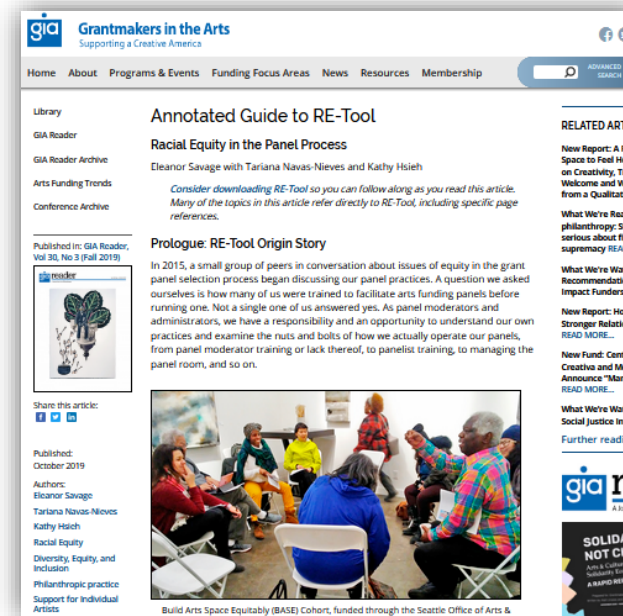
- Department-wide recruitment starting soon
- Formalized training
- Detailed scoring rubric to reduce subjectivity
- Fewer Narrative questions

Panel Process Recommendations

"Thoughtful policies around the composition and preparation of panels can support more equitable adjudication outcomes."

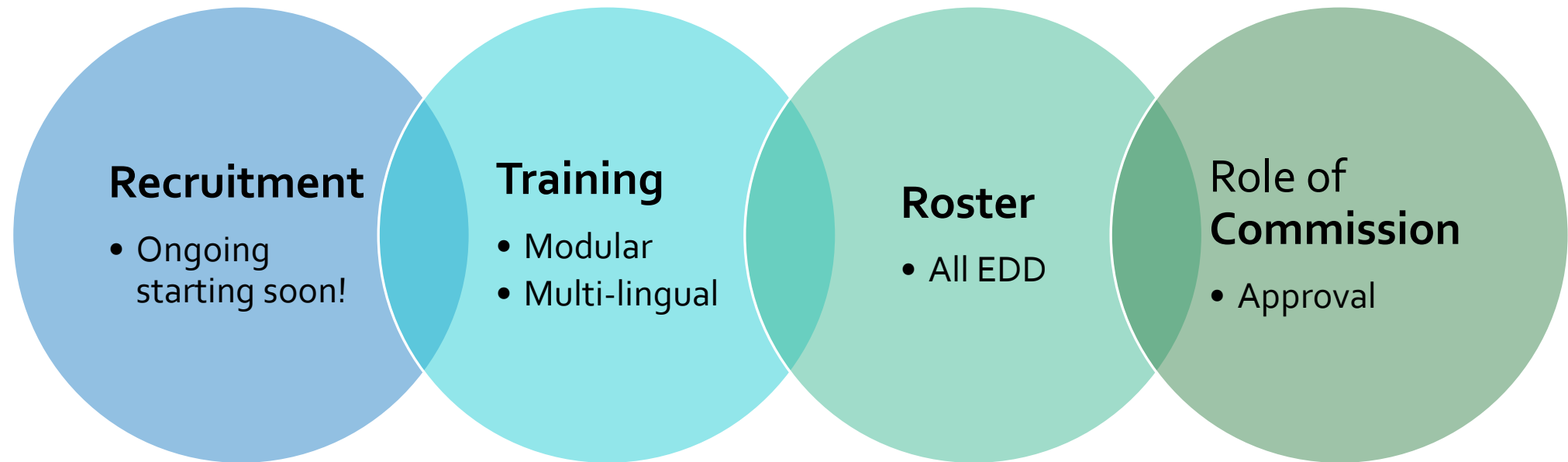


National Assembly of State Arts Agencies – Equity Choice Points



Annotated Guide to RE-Tool Racial Equity in the Panel Process

Panel Process Recommendations



Panel Training



Paid Training (\$300)

Multi-lingual; Videos and pdfs

Three modules:

- Equity and Unconscious bias (including an Austin context and guided discussion)
- Panel Expectations, Program Guidelines, Rubrics, Cultural Tourism requirements
- Technical Training for using the portal system to score applications

Application assignments after training

Panel Composition + Selection

Panels will include:

- A mix of local and out of town panelists (including community members)
- A mix of arts administrators and practicing arts professionals
- A mix of artistic discipline expertise
- Equity expertise
- Community-based artistic practice expertise
- Non-profit expertise

Selection Process:

- 1+ month before close of an application, staff will select a minimum of 15 potential panelists per panel
- Secondary form (detailed experience, availability)
- All panels will have an odd number of panelists
- 7-9 candidates must be available on the day-of meeting(s)

Panel Operations

Operations:

- Public can watch the "day-of" panels
- There will be no interaction between panelists and applicants
- Panelists will be paid for reviewing applications and also paid per meeting day
- There will **not** be **discipline specific** panels
- 501c applications will be reviewed separately from non-501c applications

Program-Specific Panel Details: Thrive

Thrive – 7-9 Panelists

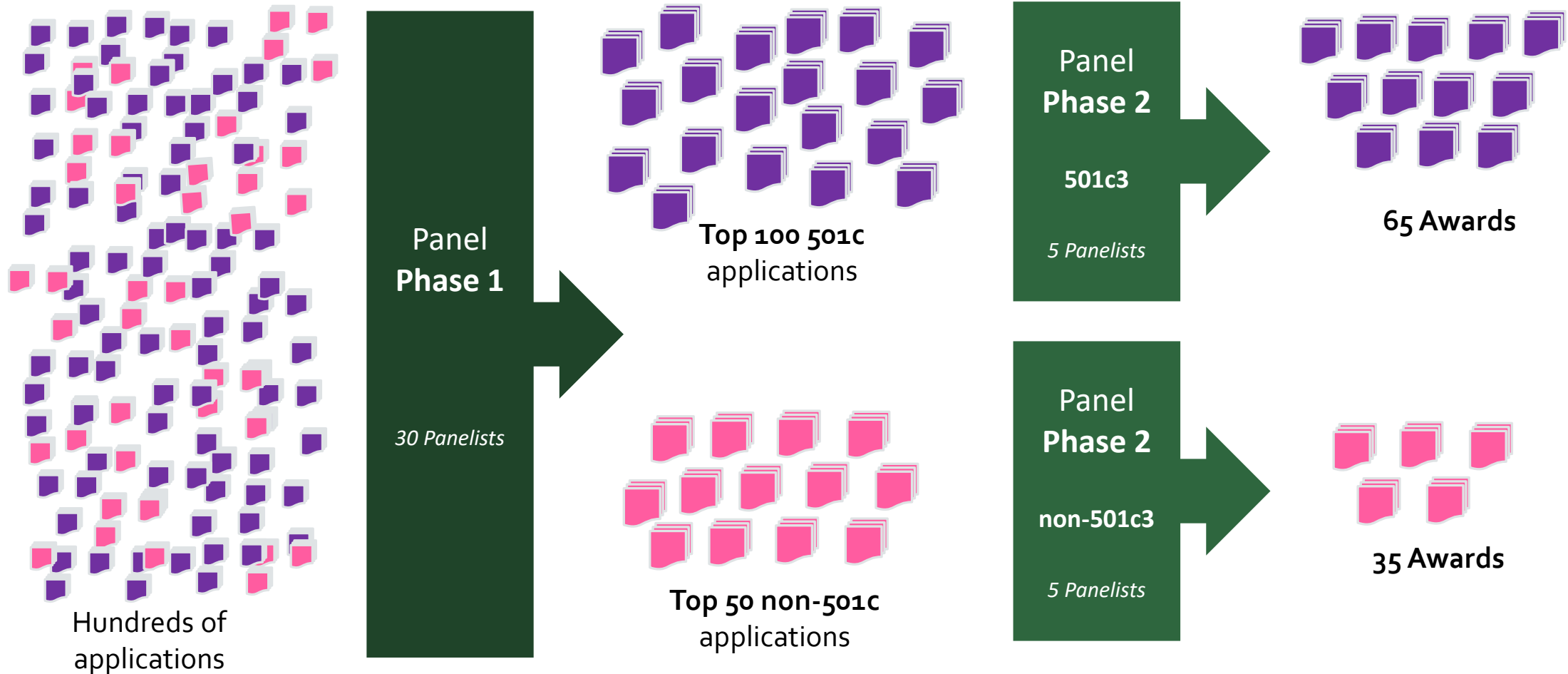
- One multidisciplinary panel will review all Thrive applications
- The panel will review and score applications prior to panel meeting(s)
- The ~50 top scoring applications will be reviewed/discussed during the panel meeting
- Panelists have the option to make a passion plea for an applicant (not top scoring) they feel has merit to be discussed at the virtual panel meeting
- Panelists will be paid for training (\$300), reviewing/scoring applications (\$300), and up to 3 meeting days (\$300/day)

Program-Specific Panel Details

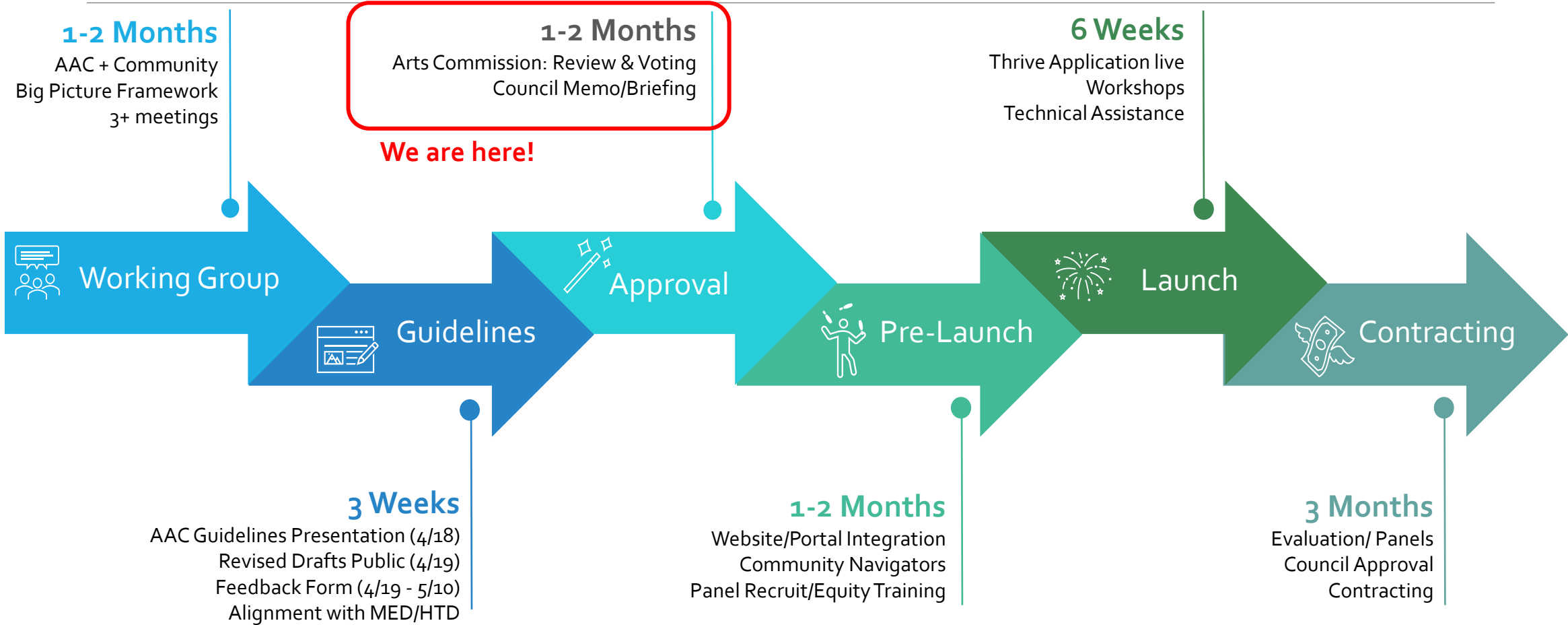
Elevate

- **ROUND 1 – 30 Panelists**
 - Minimum of 3 people will review and score each application. Panelists must provide comments.
 - A minimum of 100 top scoring Nonprofit applications will move on to round 2
 - A minimum of 50 top scoring non-501cs will move on to round 2
 - Panelist will have two weeks to review a max of 15 applications each
 - Round 1 panelists will receive payment for completing the panelist training (\$300) as well as reviewing the assigned applications (\$300)
- **ROUND 2 – 5 Panelists Reviewing 501cs; 5 Panelists Reviewing non-501cs**
 - Minimum of 5 people review each application (3-4 weeks to review)
 - A single panel will be held for top-scoring 501c applications and a separate single panel will be held for non-501c applications
 - Round 2 panelists will receive payment for completing the training (\$300), reviewing/scoring applications (\$300), and up to 2 meeting days (\$300/day)

Panel Process: Elevate



Next steps



Process Timeframe

May 25th – Council Audit & Finance Committee Meeting

May 31st – Arts Commission meeting

June 7th – African American Resource Advisory Commission presentation

June 21st – Asian American QOL Commission presentation

June 28th – Hispanic/Latino QOL Commission presentation

June 29th – Arts Commission meeting

July 7th – Panel Recruitment begins

July 11th – LGBTQIA+ QOL Commission presentation

October 12th – Cultural Funding Pilot Program: **Thrive** launches

February 2023 – Tentative **Elevate** launch

March 2023 – Tentative **Nexus** launch