



# Application for the Arts-Based, Healing-Centered Working Group

## Background

Since 2019, the LA County Arts Education Collective has described the arts-based youth development work that we support as being “healing-centered.” Our understanding of that term is very much informed by the work of Dr. Shawn Ginwright and Nedra Ginwright, who developed a model for Healing Centered Engagement (HCE) through decades of work with Black youth in the Bay Area. That model, now being taught through their organization, [Flourish Agenda](#), offers an asset-based and culturally-rooted approach to healing and well-being for young people of color and their adult allies that centers culture, agency, relationships, meaning, and aspirations (CARMA).

In addition to the Flourish Agenda model, we know that many communities, and especially many BIPOC artists and culture-bearers have been engaged in deep healing-centered work for generations and have their own models and approaches to creating healing environments.

As decades of community activism are shifting LA County systems from harm to care, and as the County continues developing an anti-racist platform, the Arts Ed Collective recognizes that supporting youth and communities in healing from generational trauma and systemic oppression, and restoring cultural identity, community agency, and collective well-being is some of the most important work that we can be engaged in.

## Purpose of the Working Group

We are bringing together an intergenerational group of healing-centered arts and cultural practitioners to co-develop a framework for arts-based healing-centered engagement. This framework will help create shared language for the arts, culture, and youth development fields across the region and can serve as a foundation for our collective work. The purpose of the framework is not to “define” arts-based healing-centered practices, as we know that healing must necessarily be community- and culturally-defined. Nor is the purpose to develop something that is static, rigid, or immutable. We hope to co-develop a framework that is dynamic, that people can see themselves and their work reflected in, that is ever-evolving as we continue to intentionally engage with it, and that helps build communities of practice and mutual support.

## Working Group Details

The Arts-based Healing-Centered Engagement Working Group will be facilitated virtually by a team of deeply experienced community practitioners from Flourish Agenda. They will use Flourish Agenda’s online HCE Certification course as one text during the sessions. Participants’ deep experience, wisdom,

and curiosity will be the other texts. The group will move through dialogue, workshopping, and experiential creative learning labs led by participants.

## Goals

Through this working group, we hope to:

- Come away with a draft framework for arts-based healing-centered engagement for LA County that will support and strengthen the region and the field's understanding and practice of arts-based, healing-centered engagement
- Support and strengthen a community or network of artists and cultural workers who work from a healing-centered approach or perspective

## Participants' Commitment

Participants will commit to:

- Completing all pre-reading prior to each session (internet access is required for the HCE Certification course material and for each meeting session)
- Attending all 7 working group sessions
- Presenting and/or participating in up to 3 learning exchanges, either during or after the 7-month period when the working group will be meeting
- Sharing learning and insights with other practitioners within and beyond the working group

Participants will receive:

- A \$1,200 honorarium for completing at least 80% of the term (through the final session date)
- A certificate in Healing Centered Engagement, a nationally-recognized youth development credential, conferred by Flourish Agenda

Session dates (all listed in Pacific time):

1. Thursday, May 12, 12pm-2pm
2. Friday, June 17, 12pm-2pm
3. Friday, July 15, 12pm-2pm
4. Friday, August 12, 12pm-2pm
5. Friday, September 9, 12pm-2pm
6. Friday, October 7, 12pm-2pm
7. Thursday, November 10, 12pm-2pm

Following the Working Group sessions listed here, Arts and Culture hopes that Working Group participants will help co-lead/co-facilitate sessions with the broader arts and youth development communities to workshop and continue to evolve the framework. Those sessions will be scheduled in conversation with Working Group participants.

**Approximate total time commitment: 30 hours over nine months (approximately 3 hrs. per month)**

## Our Commitment

Arts and Culture recognizes that as a government agency representing a County that has engaged in harmful practices (as acknowledged in the Board of Supervisors' [motion to establish an anti-racist policy agenda](#) and the [Alternatives to Incarceration Initiative](#)), our initiating this framework might feel uncomfortable and/or problematic. We enter into it with humility and in a listening stance, with an understanding that because we have the power to determine where and how County resources are

placed, our programs and policies must be developed alongside and with the very communities we serve. While we are still learning new ways of being in relationship with our community partners, we are committed to engaging in difficult conversations, strengthening our practice of shared leadership and community co-design, and supporting systems and practices that create healing.

## Application Process

If you would like to be part of the Arts-Based Healing Centered Engagement Working Group, please respond to the following questions to share more about yourself, your work, and your interest in this process. The questions are shared in this document, for your reference. However, **all written responses must be submitted [through this link](#).**

If you would like to submit a video response, rather than a written response, please record your responses to the questions and upload them to YouTube, Vimeo, or some other web-based platform. Send a link to the video to Rebecca Renard-Wilson [rrenard@arts.lacounty.gov](mailto:rrenard@arts.lacounty.gov), with "HCE Working Group video application" as the subject.

**All responses (video and written) are due by 11:59 pm (Pacific Time) on April 4, 2022.** If you'd like support with your application, you may [schedule a session](#) with one of the Arts and Culture team.

## Questions

**(All written responses must be submitted [through this link](#).** Applicants are encouraged to answer as fully as possible while staying within a recommended two-page limit.)

1. Describe what it means to you to be healing centered. (Check out our [Healing Centered Engagement zine](#)). How does healing-centered engagement look or feel as you're working with youth (whether in general or through your art?)
2. Share why you'd like to be part of this learning community and workgroup. What do you hope to gain/learn? How will deepening your understanding of healing centered engagement support your personal or professional goals? How might creating a shared framework for arts-based, healing-centered engagement support any of the communities or work that you are part of?
3. Describe what you will bring or contribute to this process, both in terms of perspectives, lived experience, approaches to your work, and in terms of ways that you "show up" in community. How will you help this working group engage with one another as a healing centered community, including when conflict or triggers arise?
4. If there is anything else that you want to share that feels aligned with the spirit of this work, please share it here. Feel free to discuss something that you are excited by, challenged by, or curious about this project. You are also welcomed, though by no means required, to upload an image, link, etc. to Rebecca ([rrenard@arts.lacounty.gov](mailto:rrenard@arts.lacounty.gov)) with the subject line "HCE Working Group Application-- Supplemental Media".