Revised BIPOC-Requirements for the Audience-Intercept Survey Process

Since the release of the Audience Intercept Survey Instructions on March 31, the AEP6 project team has fielded inquiries from several participating communities requesting clarification of the data collection process and requirements. We acknowledge that the initial “one size fits all” approach of requiring at least 25% of the audience surveys to be collected from attendees to BIPOC arts and culture organizations in each community does not account for the unique characteristics of each community. For example, a few communities may have very few (if any) BIPOC organizations from which to collect these surveys. Additionally, the lack of demographic diversity in some communities—combined with inconsistent or nonexistent practices regarding the tracking of audience demographics, and the implicit bias involved with attempting to broadly categorize audiences—adds to the challenge of identifying BIPOC organizations.

As we continue to refine this process with intentionality in consultation with the AEP6 Equity Task Force, we have revised the requirement by introducing a comparative demographic scale based on current U.S. Census data within each of the 394 participating communities. We acknowledge that this revised approach may not be perfect due to the systemic oppressive practices embedded in the Census methodology. Our intent is to ensure that there is representation of voice and diversity in the audience survey data. For the majority of communities, the requirement remains 25%.

As a reminder, Americans for the Arts is committed to addressing equity and inclusion as a critical component of the methodology, organizational participation, and collection of data for AEP6 by centering and representing BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, Native American) identifying communities—a segment of the nonprofit arts and culture sector that has been underrepresented in past studies. For the first time, AEP6 will establish a benchmark of arts and culture organizations that primarily serve communities of color, and the audiences that attend their events.

If you have any questions regarding the attached revisions, please feel free to reach out to me directly at 202-712-2061 or via email glyas@artsusa.org

Sincerely,
Dr. Genna Styles-Lyas
Director of AEP6 Community Engagement & Equity
**BACKGROUND:**
In early January, the AEP6 project team and the AEP6 Equity Task Force set out to create and engage in an equity framework for this study. The goal of the framework is to improve the representation of BIPOC arts and culture organizations and their attendees in the data. The framework will establish a benchmark in data collection and allow the researchers to quantify the economic impact of BIPOC organizations within each of the participating communities. It also aims to strengthen the value of the communication and advocacy resources that the AEP6 study will deliver, particularly for BIPOC arts and culture organizations.

**INITIAL (FORMER) REQUIREMENT:**
The initial survey instructions required each of the 394 state and local research to collect at least 25% of their audience surveys from attendees to events hosted by BIPOC and culture organizations. The instructions directed the partners to identify BIPOC arts and culture organizations based on two criteria *both of which must have been true*:

1. Organizations that have a **mission statement (or guiding principles)** that is centered on advancing, creating, and/or preserving artistic and cultural traditions **rooted in communities of color**, and
2. **More than 50%** of the organization’s audiences/attendees identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) or ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, Native American).

**REVISED (NEW) REQUIREMENT:**
Revised Definition of BIPOC Arts and Culture Organizations:
- For the purpose of the AEP6 study, **BIPOC arts and culture organizations are defined as organizations that have a mission statement (or guiding principles) that is centered on advancing, creating, and/or preserving artistic and cultural traditions rooted in communities of color.**
- Consider the overall purpose of the organization (not the purpose or intended audience of one specific program that it presents). **See the EXAMPLES of specific situations below.**
- **We have removed the criterium that more than 50% of the organization’s audiences/attendees identify as BIPOC.** Eligibility to categorize audience surveys as having been collected from a BIPOC arts and culture organization is now based solely on the mission, primary purpose, or guiding principles of the presenting or host organization.
Revise Demographic Formula for Determining Your Community’s Requirement:
The data requirement from BIPOC organizations has been revised to take a scaled approach based on each community’s unique demographic characteristics. The AEP6 project team has used the U.S. Census Bureau’s Quick Facts Tool to determine the demographic characteristics of each of the 394 participating communities, and we have shared the result for each community with the corresponding research partner.

- If 5% or less of your community’s population identifies as BIPOC, then at least 5% of the audience surveys collected in your community should be from BIPOC arts and culture organizations.
- If 6% to 10% of your community’s population identifies as BIPOC, then 6% to 10% of the audience surveys collected in your community should be from BIPOC arts and culture organizations.
- If 11% to 15% of your community’s population identifies as BIPOC, then 11% to 15% of the audience surveys collected in your community should be from BIPOC arts and culture organizations.
- If 16% to 20% of your community’s population identifies as BIPOC, then 16% to 20% of the audience surveys collected in your community should be from BIPOC arts and culture organizations.
- If 21% to 25% of your community’s population identifies as BIPOC, then 21% to 25% of the audience surveys collected in your community should be from BIPOC arts and culture organizations.
- If more than 25% of your community’s population identifies as BIPOC, then at least 25% of the audience surveys collected in your community should be from BIPOC arts and culture organizations (there is no maximum). Please note, AEP6 partners are encouraged to collect more than this minimum to ensure the data is robust for your community.

Important Research Notes about this approach:
- We acknowledge that a few participating communities may not include any BIPOC arts and culture organizations (based on the definition used for the AEP6 study). If, after a thorough examination of your community, and not one BIPOC arts and culture organizations are identified, then your audience surveys will be collected from non-BIPOC organizations. This fact in itself would be a valuable AEP6 finding. This determination should be made only after utilizing the community engagement resources provided through the AEP6 study, and after a phone consultation with Dr. Genna Styles-Lyas, Director of AEP6 Community Engagement and Equity (glyas@artsusa.org).
• The entire sample of all audience surveys that are collected in each community will be used to calculate the total estimated community-wide audience spending. This methodology is identical to our past Arts & Economic Prosperity studies. In order to complete a baseline analysis of only audiences at BIPOC arts and culture organizations, a minimum statistical sample of 200 surveys is required from attendees to BIPOC arts and culture organizations. This analysis will not be completed for research partners who do not provide a minimum sample of 200 surveys from BIPOC organizations.

• The audience survey captures information on the demographic characteristics (age, household income, education attainment, race/ethnicity, and disability status) of all survey respondents. Therefore, audience demographic information will be captured and analyzed for each of the 394 participating communities, regardless of the prevalence of surveys collected from attendees to BIPOC organizations in any given community.

EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC SITUATIONS:
Below is a list of specific examples that have come up in our conversations with partners. We hope they can serve as a guidepost for you. Please direct questions about specific situations in your community to Dr. Genna Styles-Lyas at glyas@artsusa.org or 202-712-2061.

- **EXAMPLE #1:** “Our local library hosts an annual festival and parade that celebrates a BIPOC community. Can we collect audience surveys at that event and categorize them as collected from a BIPOC organization?”
  - **ANSWER:** No. Eligibility to categorize audience surveys as having been collected from a BIPOC arts and culture organization is based only on the overall mission, primary purpose, or guiding principles of the presenting or hosting organization (not on the purpose or audience of one specific activity). The organization’s mission or primary purpose must be centered on advancing, creating, and/or preserving artistic and cultural traditions rooted in communities of color. In this example, the library is a municipal organization that is responsible for serving the entire community. As a result, even though this specific event is focused on celebrating a BIPOC community, the event is not eligible for BIPOC audience surveys.

- **EXAMPLE #2:** “My community does not have any BIPOC arts and culture organizations as defined by the AEP6 study. What do we do?”
  - **ANSWER:** If you think this is true in your community, schedule a phone consultation with Dr. Genna Styles-Lyas. Let’s work together to make sure that you have exhausted the list of resources and strategies before making a final
determination We acknowledge that some communities may have zero BIPOC arts and culture organizations based on the AEP6 definition. If, after a thorough examination of your community, and not one BIPOC arts and culture organizations can be identified, then your audience surveys will be collected from non-BIPOC organizations. (It is important to note that the audience survey itself does collect the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. Therefore, the study findings will include the demographics of each community’s arts audiences, regardless of the prevalence of BIPOC arts and culture organizations.)

- **EXAMPLE #3**: “More than half of the population of my entire community identifies as BIPOC. Therefore, should we collect more than half of our audience surveys from activities hosted by BIPOC arts and culture organizations?”
  - **ANSWER**: Using the scaled approach, since more than 25% of your community’s population identifies as BIPOC, you should collect at least 25% of your audience surveys from activities hosted by BIPOC arts and culture organizations. Remember that eligibility to categorize audience surveys as having been collected from a BIPOC arts and culture organization is based only on the mission/purpose/guiding principles of the organization where they are being collected. Your overall goal is to collect a sample of audience surveys that is representative of your community’s total annual arts attendance. For example, if you estimate that 50% of your community’s total annual arts attendance takes place at BIPOC arts and culture organizations (based on the AEP6 definition), then try to collect 50% of your audience surveys from activities hosted by BIPOC organizations.

- **EXAMPLE #4**: “Our community has a thriving and diverse BIPOC community within a university setting. Could I categorize audience surveys collected from university programming as having been collected from a BIPOC arts and culture organization?”
  - **Answer**: If there is an organization that meets the AEP6 study’s definition of a BIPOC arts and culture organization that is located within a college or university, then you may be able to categorize surveys collected from its activities has having been collected from a BIPOC organization. A few specific scenarios are listed below:
    - What about arts or cultural programming hosted by a BIPOC Greek or other BIPOC social/ cultural organization located within a college or university? Yes, surveys collected from this type of activity would qualify as BIPOC.
What about arts or cultural programming hosted by a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) or Hispanic-serving institution (HSI)? Yes, surveys collected from this type of activity would qualify as BIPOC.

How about BIPOC-focused arts and cultural programming hosted by a university’s Center for Student Activities? No, surveys collected from this type of activity would not qualify as BIPOC.

**EXAMPLE #5:** “In my region, I have found some organizations are BIPOC lead and the majority of the folks they serve or aim performances or programs are BIPOC, but these organizations don’t have the EXACT language described in the criteria shared. Do they count?”

**ANSWER:** It is unlikely that any organization will have a mission statement that exactly matches the AEP6 definition of BIPOC eligibility. Grab some additional information about the organization such as the website and a list of its programs and/or services. Then schedule some time with Dr. Genna Styles-Lyas and we can help.