



**JEROME**  
FOUNDATION

# FY21 ANNUAL REVIEW

May 1, 2020–April 30, 2021

*Chronicle X*, by playwright, director, and performer Nia Witherspoon (2019 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow), presented by Musical Theatre Factory, HERE, and The Shed. Photo by Ahad Subzwari.

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# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

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What a year it was.

This past year\* brought, among other phenomena, the long overdue reckoning around ongoing systemic racism, sparked in large part by the murder of George Floyd here in Minnesota, the COVID pandemic, deep political divisions, social unrest, election violence and new levels of ongoing disinformation—all of which shaped social interactions, personal relationships and business practices in powerful ways. In the wake of COVID, businesses in all sectors enacted major layoffs, shifted to remote office structures and, in many cases struggled to survive (not all successfully). Workers in all industries entered complex new lives, many confronting loss of employment and/or benefits, radical reductions in income and the need to simultaneously juggle home schooling, health care and work from home, among other challenges.

*\* The Jerome Foundation fiscal year referred to in this report covers the period of May 1, 2020–April 30, 2021.*

Arts organizations and artists were disproportionately impacted by all of these trends. Artists—especially freelance artists—lost not only performance, exhibitions and screening opportunities but also those “day jobs” in other sectors on which they had depended for critical income and benefits (including health care). Many artists from financial necessity relocated during the pandemic or took up work in other sectors, leading to possibilities of an enormous long-term talent drain.



COVID mask created by Adrienne Benjamin. All My Relations Gallery asked artists to create one artistic mask and 30 to be functional and donated to the Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors Group. Photo by Jaida Grey Eagle.

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But specific disciplines were impacted differently, even while organizations in every discipline reduced staffs, trimmed salaries, slashed budgets and more. Literature—with its dependence on authors who frequently already write in isolation and its already accomplished migration to electronic and virtual platforms—had, according to some accounts, a surprisingly robust year, especially as citizens forced to stay home turned more and more to reading for solace and enjoyment.



Celebrating 50 years of The Feminist Press.

Film migrated even more to virtual distribution. Visual arts organizations began to test re-emergence by placing severe limits on attendance and using staggered gallery visits times, while performing arts facilities generally remained closed entirely. Whatever the discipline, it was a year in which reserves were depleted and in which the ability to attract and retain donors—who themselves were experiencing heightened pleas for support from every sector—became more and more critically important. The already fraught competition for the traditional contributed dollar became even more intense.

Many artists and organizations looked at this chapter as a forced hiatus or interruption. Their concerns were focused on when and how they might best resume and return to the missions and values they had pursued before. Their dedication and passion remained strong, while their strategic questions often were driven by internal concerns and their primary vantage point lay in reasserting their historic value.

Others saw this moment as a moment to redefine and restructure. They more frequently looked outwards to question how best to attach to current community needs, reimagining and restructuring workplace, leadership, communication, presentation and missions, often with increased attention to a current and future civic value as well as to the artistic value. And still others—particularly younger artists and those committed to social justice—emerged in entirely new ways, proclaiming the value of a solidarity economy and inventing new opportunities for mutual support, even while calling into question the larger structures of public and private support on which the arts have historically depended.

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Throughout the entirety of the year, Jerome Foundation staff were deeply inspired by the dedication, the creativity, the persistence and the courage of arts professionals, whichever of these paths they had chosen. This was a year in which communities saw the launch of Zoom performances in theater and dance, an explosion of radio plays, the flourishing of artwork in street murals and protest paintings, enhanced public participation through interactive arts classes taught online, musical porch performances broadcast through the internet and more—the courageous proclamation of an industry that it would not be defeated, even while many of these activities brought little if any remuneration and were often borne on the backs of the artists themselves.

As the Jerome Foundation closed its fiscal year on April 30, the country was in a nascent moment (barring the outbreak of a new variant virus) of a thaw, a returning. With the wider access to COVID vaccines, relaxed federal restrictions on masking in outdoor settings and greater percentages of the population already vaccinated, arts organizations were cautiously ramping up and coming back. Live in-person performances were on the rise, limited capacity seating in auditoria was being tested, and organizations were beginning to restaff—a process that, while an enormous opportunity to reconfigure the workforce with more racially and generationally diverse staffs, will require not only restaffing but also reconceiving and redefining the entire organizational culture.

Now hanging over this gathering momentum are very real questions: what will happen as the current Delta variant gathers momentum or if an even more aggressive COVID variant appears? How rapidly will audiences feel comfortable sitting in closer proximity to one another? What impact has the explosion of virtual product had on live attendance? How will organizations reconcile their own social goals with union agreements, which in many cases tie the hands of arts organizations in whom they may hire? Will donors continue to support organizations in their return—especially those whose donations last year were unused and unclaimed tickets and/or those for whom the arts have been not a primary cause but a secondary one? Having opened the virtual portals more extensively in many cases, how can artists and organizations positively monetize these efforts? Indeed, what will be the proper future balance of resources—both energy and monies—between the virtual and the live?

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While their financial assets and an unprecedentedly strong market have largely insulated private foundations (including Jerome) from these pressures, this year has been one that has required deep self-reflection. In this moment of upheaval, many voices have urged philanthropy to consider significant changes, many of which Jerome had already been embracing: the shift to multiyear grants, to more flexible forms of support with greater emphasis on general operating support, to involving communities in deciding grants and defining priorities, and to making greater investment in BIPOC communities. But these methods and strategies were only a piece of a larger set of challenges being raised.



Installation view of ***The Labor We Wear*** (Minneapolis Institute of Arts) by 2019 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow Rachel Breen.

Deeper conversations tied the concept of philanthropy to colonial structures that have perpetuated racism and oppression. Now, many asked, how should the source of foundation wealth inform the causes and the beneficiaries that foundations support? How should foundations leverage investing practices to rectify historic inequities? Should Foundations have shorter life spans instead of perpetuity and be compelled to distribute more than the historic 5% minimum?—questions that Jerome began to examine during this last year as we opened discussions of ESG investing, committed to giving significantly above its 5% minimum over a five year period, and stepped more and more deeply into understanding imperatives around equity.

Only time of course will tell, but the coming year will be as challenging but as full of opportunity—albeit in very different ways—than the past. We continue to look to artists to inspire, inform and help the lead the way into a better future for us all.

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# GRANT GIVING

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## HIGHLIGHTS FOR FY21

# \$5.3M

GRANTS PAID IN FY21

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More than \$1.6M above the Foundation's originally approved grants budget.

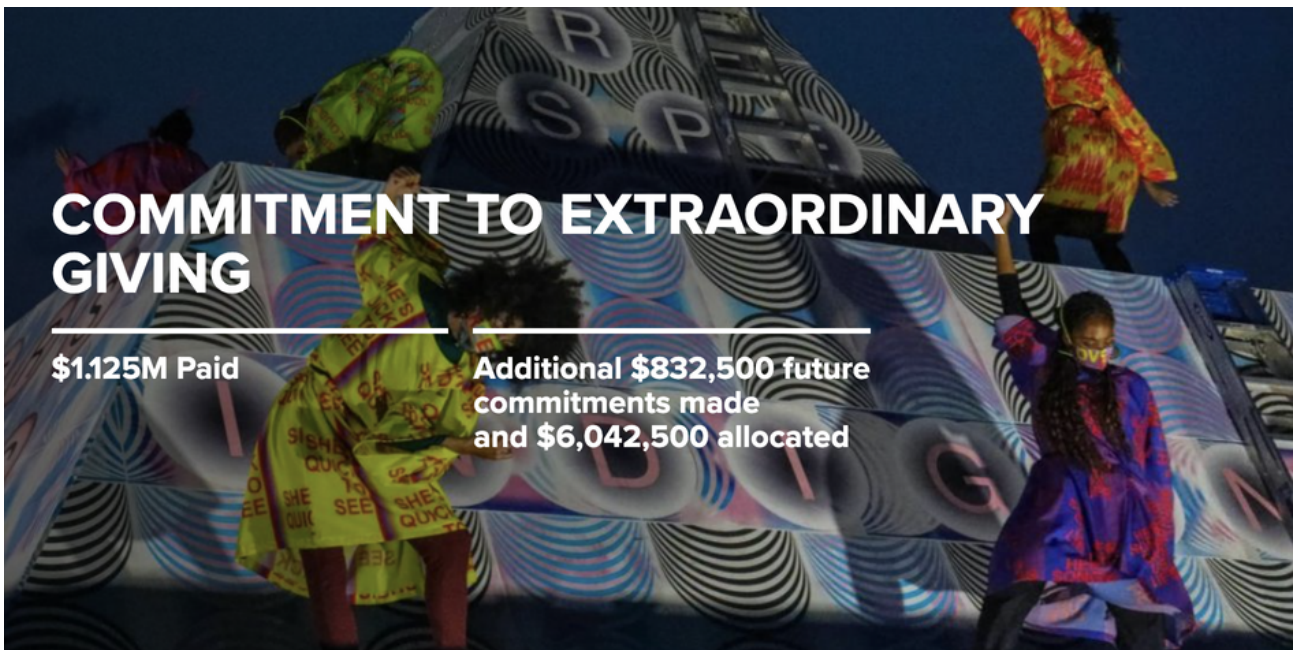
# \$3.45M

ADDITIONAL  
COMMITMENTS MADE  
FOR FUTURE YEARS

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A list of specific payments made in FY21 will be posted as part of the Foundation's annual PF-990 tax return, which will be posted at [www.jeromefdn.org/financials](http://www.jeromefdn.org/financials) by September.

A summary of the Highlights of FY21 follows.

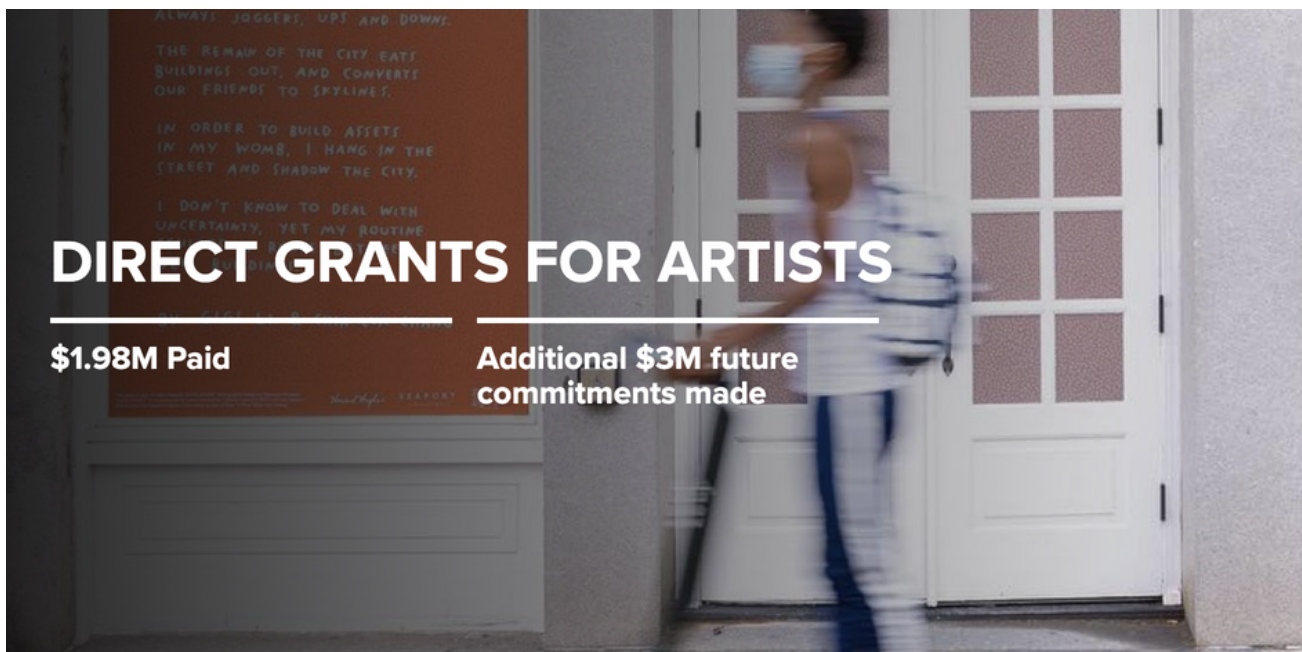


Emily Johnson performance at Jeffrey Gibson's *Because Once You Enter My House It Becomes Our House* at Socrates Sculpture Park. Image by Scott Lynch.

With the continuation of the COVID crisis and the deepening distress experienced by artists and arts organizations, the Foundation reconsidered its long-standing policy of hewing closely to the 5% minimum distribution requirement in order to grow assets over time and increase the Foundation's giving in both grant size and number of awards.

A number of other prominent foundations—notably Ford, Andrew W. Mellon and Doris Duke—had been deeply inspiring by their extraordinary commitments. The Jerome Foundation discussion asked Directors and Members to consider issues of annual growth goals, the Foundation's mission, its core values, its assumption of perpetuity and the urgency of the moment.

In September 2020, the Board agreed to commit an **additional \$8M for grants** above and beyond the 5% minimum between FY21–25. Recognizing however the likely disappearance of temporary government relief efforts and the potential of donor fatigue, the Foundation consciously agreed to spend funds deliberately and reserve the bulk of these funds for distribution in FY 23–25.



Poem (on left) co-authored by 2019 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow Chia-Lun Chang (from Asiya Wadud's *Echo Exhibit*).


**Jerome Hill Artist Fellows.** In FY21, the Foundation made final payments totaling \$1.5M to Fellows chosen in the inaugural round of this program in 2019 and selected the recipients for 60 Fellowships totaling \$3.0M over the next two years. Given the quality of the more than 820 applications and the extraordinary nature of the times, the Foundation elected to award additional small grants to applicants who had ultimately not been designated as grantees but had been identified by panels as finalists (\$5,000 each) or alternates (\$7,500 each) for a total of \$480,000.

Jerome Hill Artist Fellowships support artists in dance, film/video/new media, literature, music, theater/performance/spoken word and/or visual arts at early stages in their careers to create new work, enhance their artistic development and/or engage in activities that would enhance their professional careers.

Fellowships are valued at \$25,000 each year for two successive years. Fellowship recipients also can elect to receive free individualized professional development counseling provided by the MAP Fund of New York or in the first round also by Springboard for the Arts in St. Paul, MN.



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## DIRECT GRANTS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

**\$2,365,084 Paid**

**Additional \$1,714,800  
future commitments made**

Immanuel Wilkins' **BLUES BLOOD | BLACK FUTURE** at Roulette Intermedium

In January 2020 (before the onset of COVID), the Foundation had awarded two-year project grants to organizations with first payments scheduled for FY21. With the outbreak of COVID, the Foundation responded initially by removing the project restrictions and restructuring these grants as flexible operating grants. This step gave organizations both the confidence and the latitude to respond more holistically to the changes around them as they made difficult decisions in hopes of survival. More than 2/3 of the grantees reported that they continued to target the bulk of funds towards serving early career artists, while noting this latitude gave them the ability to support them in new ways that were more responsive and appropriate to the times than the original projects would have been.

Additionally, recognizing both the same depth of applicant merit beyond the grantee roster and the challenging nature of the times, the Foundation chose to expand the roster of organizations funded in January 2020 (less than two months before the COVID pandemic outbreak) by offering grants to finalists (\$35,000) and alternates (\$40,000 ) over two years for total additional awards of \$477.5K.

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## CONSORTIUM GRANTS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

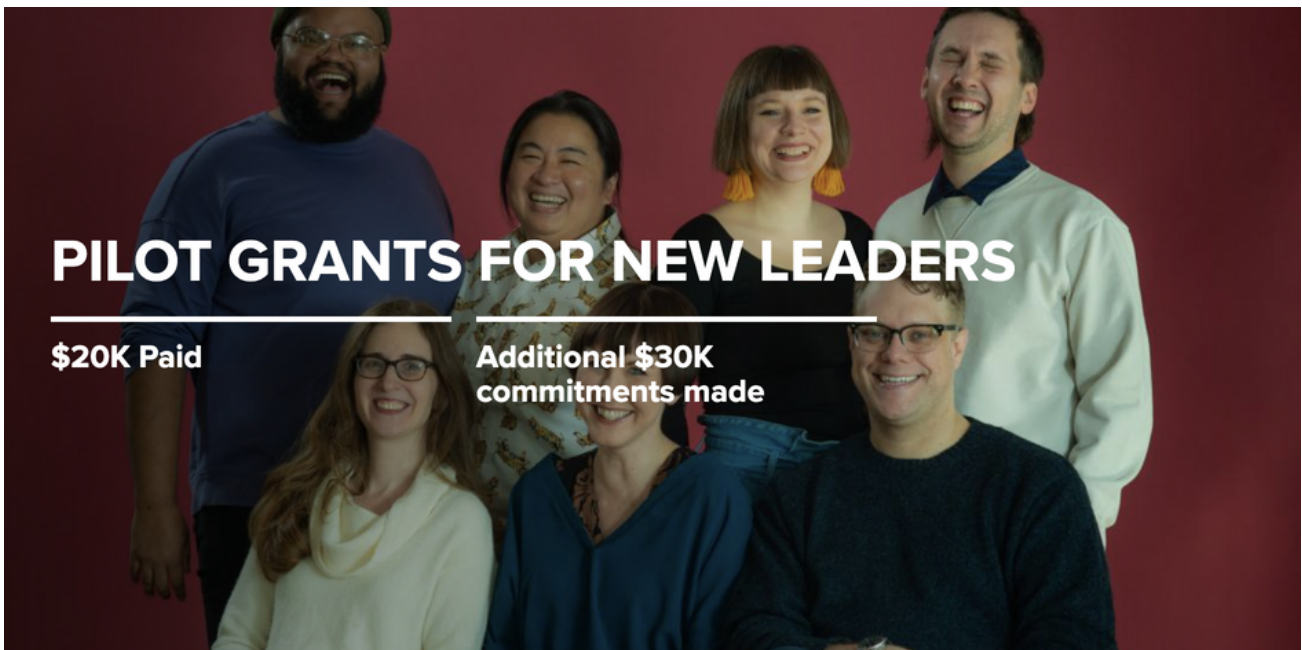
\$500K Paid

Additional \$500K  
commitments made



*Twelve Angry Men... and Women*, staged by the Billie Holiday Theater in Brooklyn. Photo by Hollis King/The Billie Holiday Theater.

The Foundation also heard, especially from BIPOC organizations, the need for deeper investment and more consolidated approaches to maximize income and reduce the time dedicated to fundraising from multiple discrete sources. In addition to the grants determined and awarded directly by the Foundation, Jerome joined collectives of other funders and awarded an additional \$1 million to support BIPOC Organizations in Minnesota and New York City. These grants included \$600,000 awarded to Propel for Nonprofits in Minneapolis MN in support of Seeding Future Treasures and \$400,000 to the New York Community Trust in support of the Mosaic Network and Fund.



The seven artistic directors of Red Eye Theater, an artist-led organization with a collective leadership model.

A more focused portfolio of small grants was created to recognize the critical nature of leadership transitions at organizations, especially in this moment. With many organizations financially pressed, resources to conduct searches were scarce. Additionally, new leaders were (or would be) asked to assume their positions in a moment with little discretionary money with which they could launch new activities, conduct research, engage consultants, find new ways to rebuild the organizational culture, and more. Through a series of grants in Minnesota, the Staff began to test a pilot initiative supporting leadership transitions with a double focus of support for searches and support for discretionary funds for the new leader once in place.

These by-invitation only grants were generally limited to \$10,000 to support a search and \$10,000 for a new leader discretionary fund, and to organizations with which the Foundation already had a significant funding history. The Foundation will be monitoring the use and value of these funds in the coming year and will decide whether to expand this program in scale or geographic reach.

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# COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Throughout the year, every committee’s work and every Board action was examined through an EDI lens to ensure that the Foundation’s commitment was realized in action in every dimension of the organization.

In FY21, the Foundation continued its exploration of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, guided an internal EDI Working Group composed of Directors, Members and Staff. In FY21, the Board engaged in a mini-retreat, led by the Giving Practice of Seattle, WA, and met with Minnesota Council on Foundations President Susie Brown and the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer Lulete Mola to learn about EDI progress in the larger philanthropic sector. The Foundation subsequently issued an RFP for assessment, training and planning in FY22, which was ultimately awarded to The Equity Project of Denver, CO.

In examining its own assets, the Foundation began initial examinations of ESG investment strategies for the future. It also began deeper consideration of its inherited timber properties, with different board meetings featuring presentations from timber management experts, Hill family descendants and Northwest Native American tribal leader Bud Lane.



Some of the Minnesota-based 2021 Jerome Hill Artist Fellows at a Zoom orientation with Jerome staff, Moira Brennan of MAP Fund staff and facilitator Signe Harriday.

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# 64%

of Jerome-supported programs at organizations were led by BIPOC directors or executives in FY21

Individual artists were asked to self-identify those dimensions they found most salient to their identities and within their comfort levels. Many artists additionally identified specific characteristics of nationality, immigrational generation, religion, family role and/or geography, to cite a few additional dimensions cited by multiple artists.

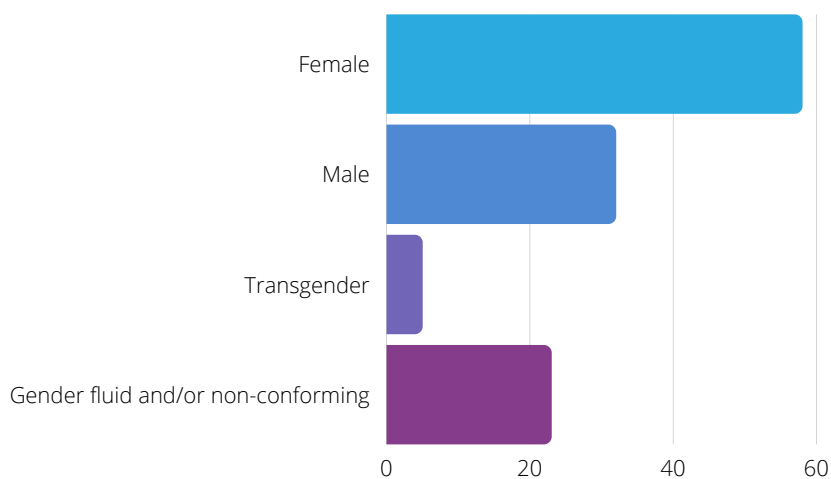
# 82%

of Jerome Hill Artists fellows receiving funding in FY21 identified as BIPOC

# 86%

of Jerome Hill Artist Fellows chosen in FY21 to receive funding over the next two years identified as BIPOC

Gender of Jerome Hill Artist Fellows chosen in FY21 (by percentage)  
(some artists chose multiple identifications)



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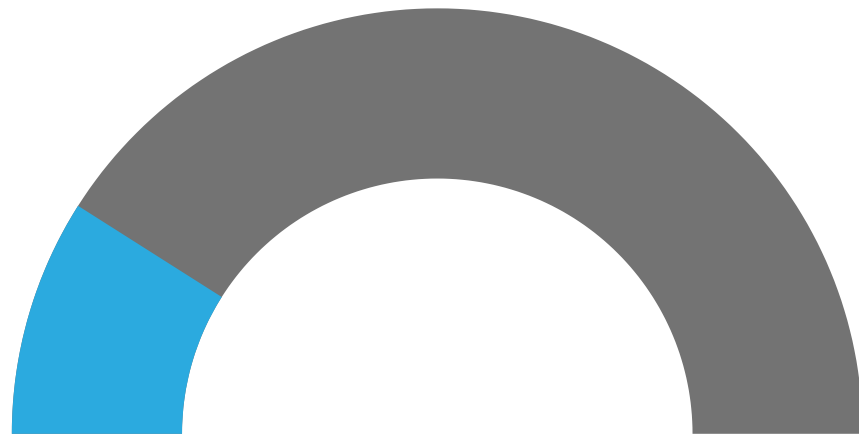
In measuring its own demographics, the Foundation was attentive to race, gender, generation and physical ability. Of the 73 panelists used by Jerome in FY21, 75% were BIPOC, 58% female, 64% heterosexual, and 1% part of a disability community. Of the 9 members of the FY21 Jerome Foundation Board of Directors, 6 identified as BIPOC (67%) with representation from African descent, Asian descent and Native American communities and 5 as female (55%). 44% of Directors were Baby Boomers, 33% were Gen X and 22% Millennials. Within the full-time Jerome staff of 4, 3 identified as European descent (75%), 2 as female and 1 as gender non-conforming; 75% as gay/queer; and as Baby Boomers (25%); Gen X (25%) and Millennials (50%). There were no people with reported disabilities on either the staff or the Board.

More specific charts are found at the end of this report.

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# **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES & TOTAL FOUNDATION ASSETS**

Program and administrative expenses for the year totaled \$1,139,482, inclusive not only of all rent, salaries, benefits, consultant fees, technology, etc., but also of all panel meeting expenses, panelist honoraria and memberships in philanthropic associations.



program and administrative expenses (18%, \$1,139,482)  
vs. grants paid (82%, \$5.3M)

## **FOUNDATION ASSETS AT THE END OF FY21**

# **\$128,740,399**

Foundation assets showed remarkable growth in FY21, increasing in average annual value by almost 30% from the prior year.

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# GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

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The Jerome Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors, elected by the Members of the Jerome Corporation, a small circle of individuals connected to the Hill family either by interest or by heritage who are charged with preserving the legacy of founder Jerome Hill. In FY21, these individuals were as follows:

## Officers



**LINDA EARLE**  
Chair »

Professor of Practice in Art History, Tyler School of Art at Temple University



**KATE BARR**  
Vice-Chair »

President and CEO, Propel Nonprofits



**DANIEL ALEXANDER JONES**  
Secretary »

Theatre, Music and Performing Artist



**RICK SCOTT**  
Treasurer »

Retired (former VP of Finance and Compliance, McKnight Foundation)

## Directors



**SARAH BELLAMY**  
Director »

Artistic Director, Penumbra



**THOMAS LAX**  
Director »

Curator of Media and Performance, the Museum of Modern Art



**LORI POURIER**  
Director »

President/CEO, First Peoples Fund



**SANJIT SETHI**  
Director »

President, Minneapolis College of Art and Design



**ELIZABETH STREB**  
Director »

Founding Director and Choreographer, Streb Extreme Action Company



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## Members of the Jerome Foundation Corporation



**LIBBY HLAVKA**  
Member »



**SARA MAUD LYDIATT-VANIER**  
Chair »



**WILLIAM SHEELINE**  
Member »



**NICK SLADE**  
Member »

## Staff

The work of the Foundation is managed by a staff of four full-time and two part-time staff, all located in Minnesota. In FY21 these were:



**BEN**  
Cameron »  
President



**ELEANOR**  
Savage »  
Program Director



**LANN**  
Briel »  
Program Officer



**ANDREA**  
Brown »  
Grants and Program Administrator



**LORI**  
Lawonn »  
Controller



**CORETTA**  
Kendricks »  
Staff Accountant

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# A LOOK FORWARD:

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While the temptation in many quarters has been to see the COVID phenomenon as an isolated event that the nation will move past, this may well be the first of many large scale disruptions—whether from new diseases, climate change, social upheaval, terrorism or a host of other potential causes. The coming years will bring a necessary redirection of energies, asking organizations and artists to think less of building stable organizations and more about building resilient ones, less of gauging value exclusively from the vantage point of artistic excellence (itself a problematic concept) and additionally by relevance and vitality, less of artistic safety and more of artistic courage. It is in short a major inflection moment for nonprofit arts that will demand Jerome to be thoughtful, to make intentional and hard choices, and to be patient even as the world moves at every dizzying speed.



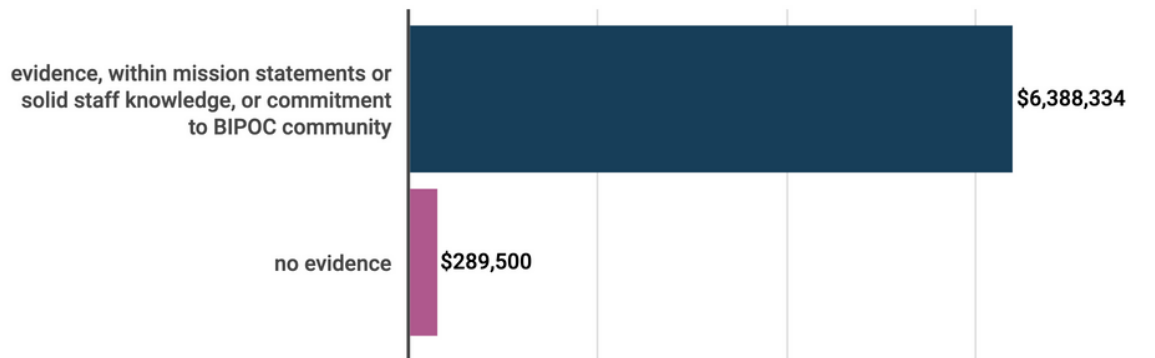
***Let the Crows Come In***, by Ashwini Ramaswamy (2019 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow).

# APPENDIX

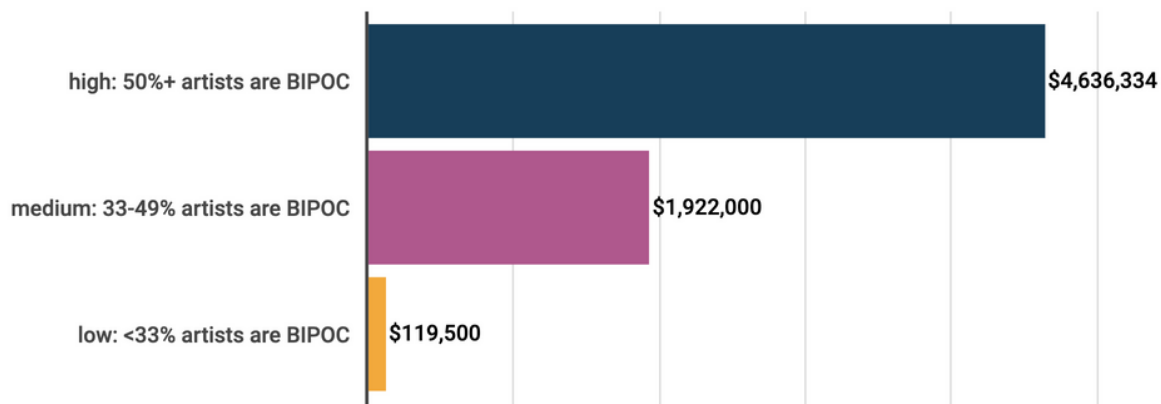
## EDI CHARTS

### Arts Organization Grants

#### Funding by Mission and Leadership

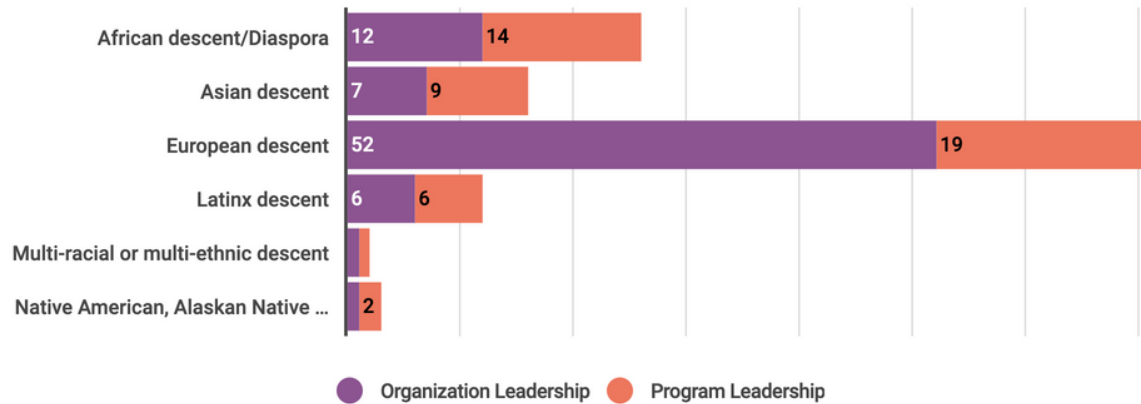


#### Funding by Artists Participating in Jerome-Funded Programs

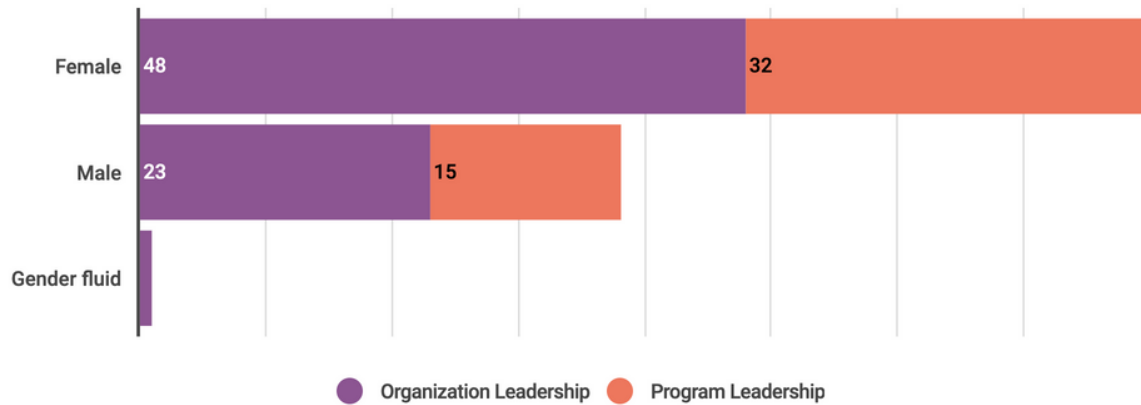


# Arts Organization Grants, cont.

## Organizational and Program Leadership by Race/Ethnicity

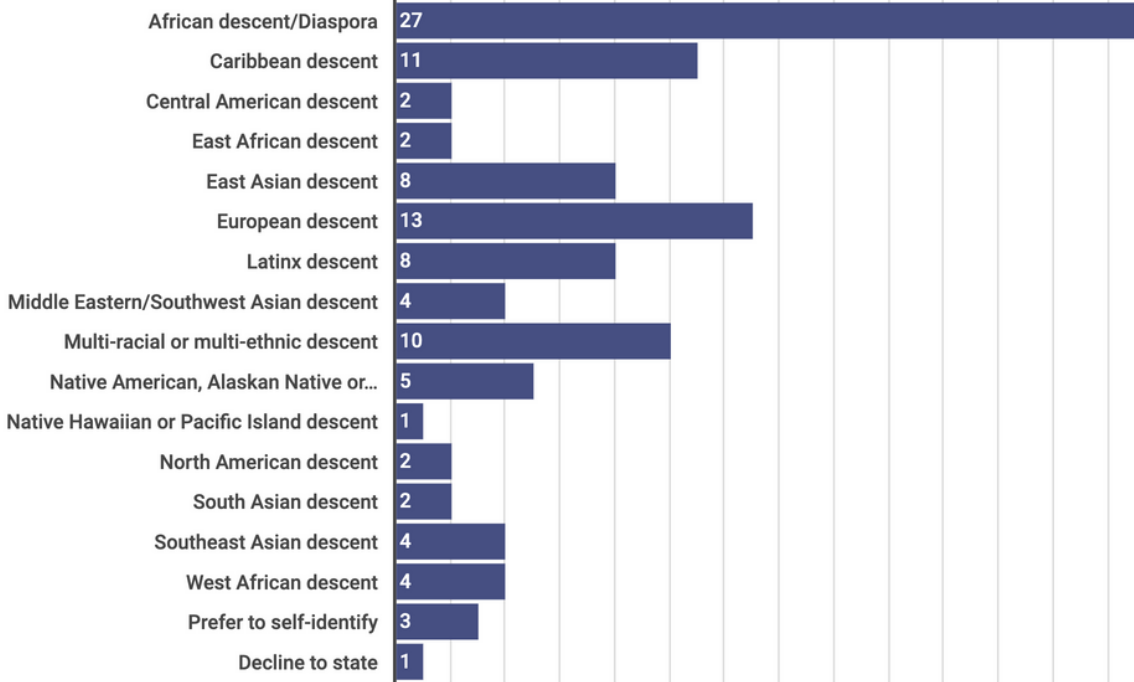


## Organizational and Program Leadership by Gender

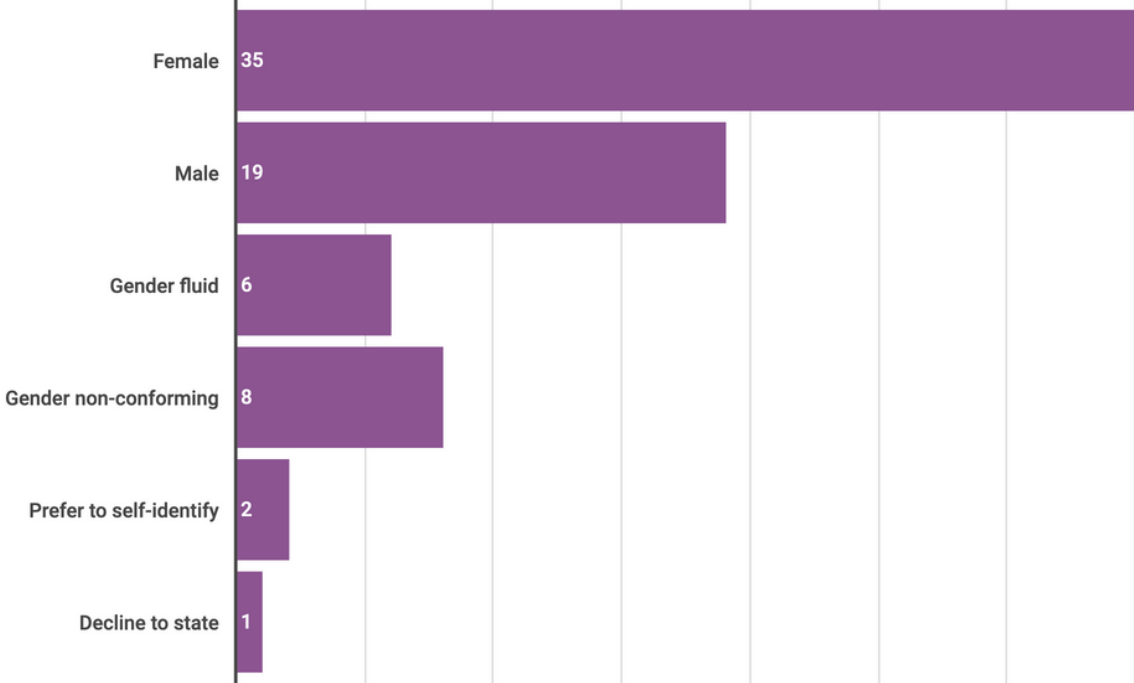


# Jerome Hill Artist Fellowships

## 2021 Fellows by Race/Ethnicity\*



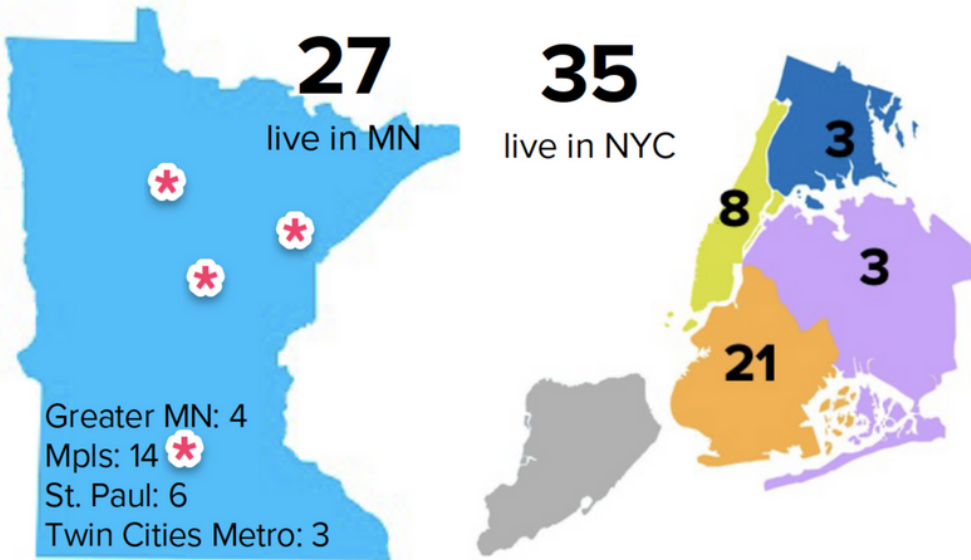
## 2021 Fellows by Gender\*



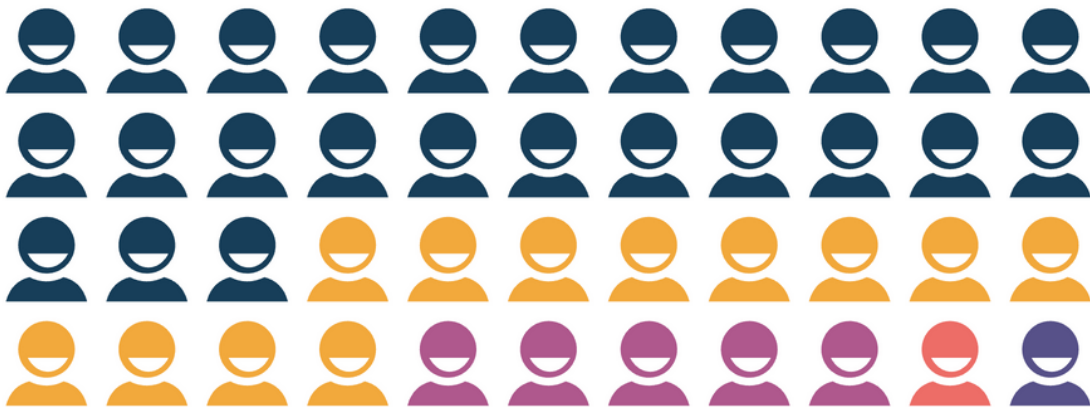
\* respondents could select more than one identifier

# Jerome Hill Artist Fellowships, cont.

## 2021 Fellows by Geography



## 2021 Fellows by Age

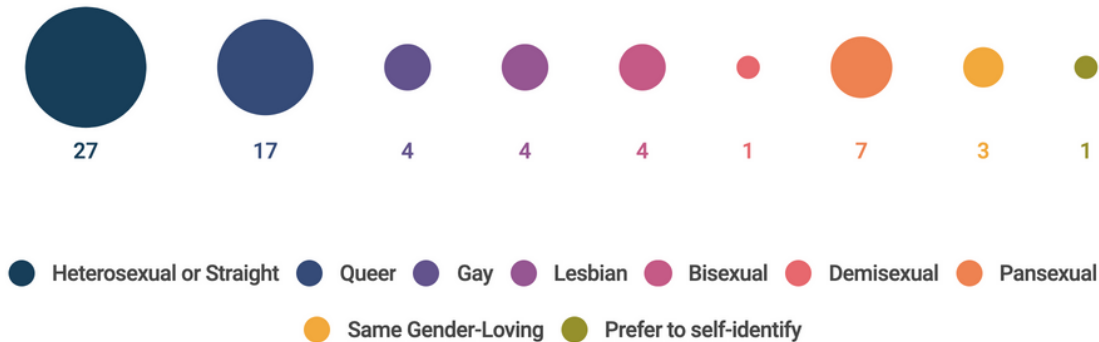


● 25-34 ● 35-44 ● 45-54 ● 55-64 ● 65-74

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# Jerome Hill Artist Fellowships, cont.

## 2021 Fellows by Sexuality\*



**3 Fellows are transgender.**

**5 Fellows are part of the disability community.**

\* respondents could select more than one identifier

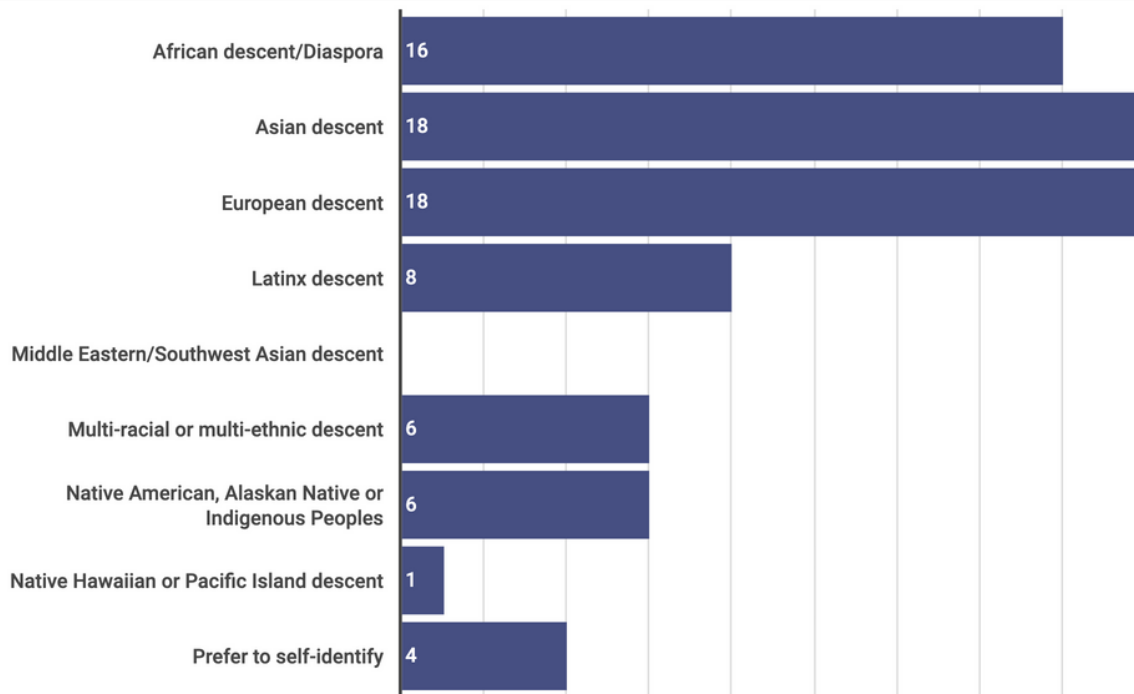
# Panelists:

## 2020 Arts Organization and 2021 Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship

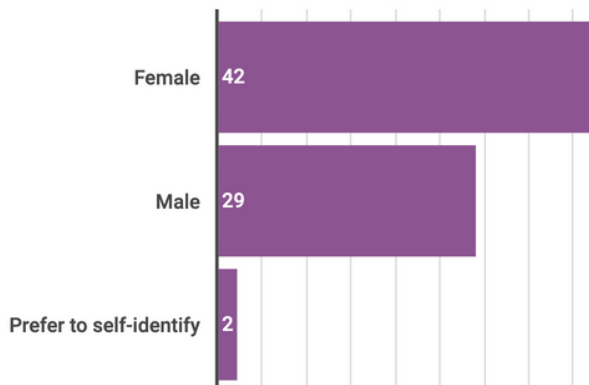
All grants in the Support to Organizations, Fellowships, and Film programs are adjudicated by discipline-specific panels of professional artists and arts leaders, who recommend rosters of grantees to the Jerome Foundation Board of Directors for final approval.

The following captures the composition of the panelists responsible for recommending grantees in FY21.

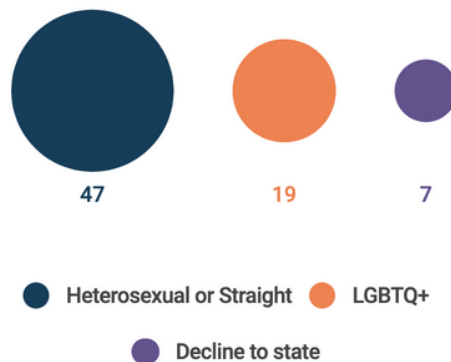
### Panelists by Race/Ethnicity\*



### Panelists by Gender\*



### Panelists by Sexuality

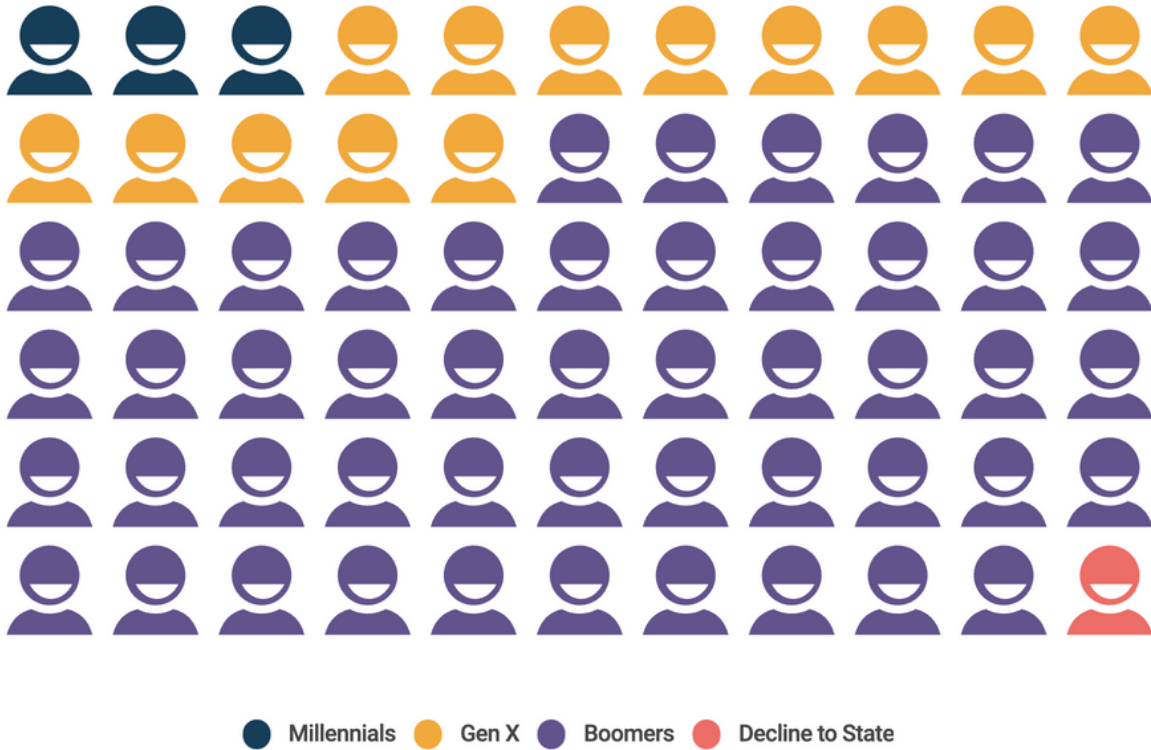


\* respondents could select more than one identifier




# Panelists, cont.

## Panelists by Generation\*



## Panelists by Geography

 **26**  
live in Minnesota

 **30**  
live in New York City

 **17**  
live elsewhere

**One panelist is transgender.**

**5 panelists are part of the disability community.**

\* respondents could select more than one identifier



**JEROME**  
FOUNDATION

The Jerome Foundation, founded in 1964 by artist and philanthropist Jerome Hill (1905-1972), honors his legacy through multi-year grants to support the creation, development, and presentation of new works by early career artists.

The Foundation makes grants to vocational early career artists, and those nonprofit arts organizations that serve them, in all disciplines in the state of Minnesota and the five boroughs of New York City.

## Our Values

The Foundation's core values, which we strive to model in our practice as grantmakers and to support in our grantees, are:

### DIVERSITY

We consciously embrace diversity in the broadest sense. We support a diverse range of artists and organizations, including but not limited to those of diverse cultures, races, sexual identities, genders, generations, aesthetics, points of view, physical abilities, and missions. We support a diverse range of artistic disciplines and forms, created in a variety of contexts and for different audiences.

### INNOVATION & RISK

We applaud unconventional approaches to solving problems and support artists and organizations that challenge and engage the traditional aesthetic and/or social dimensions of their respective disciplines.

### HUMILITY

We work for artists (rather than the reverse) and believe that artists and organizations are the best authorities to define their needs and challenges—an essential humility reflective of Jerome Hill, our founder. The artists and arts organizations we support embrace their roles as part of a larger community of artists and citizens, and consciously work with a sense of purpose, whether aesthetic, social or both.