

OMB Number: XXXX-XXXX

Expiration Date: XX/XX/XX

HBCU Research Study Focus Group Discussion Guide

February 2024

Sponsored by:

National Endowment for the Arts

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Introduction and Verbal Consent

Hello, and thank you for joining us today! My name is [name]. I am a researcher with 2M Research, the research and evaluation firm contracted by the National Endowment for the Arts to conduct this study. I will be facilitating our conversation today. We are also joined by [anyone from 2M who may be joining], who will support this conversation by taking notes and possibly asking clarifying questions.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is conducting a study to facilitate the engagement of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) with federal and state grant opportunities in the arts. Recognizing the significant economic, cultural, and scientific contributions that HBCUs have made in the United States, the overall goal of the HBCU Research Study is to facilitate HBCU engagement with federal and state grant opportunities in the arts. The study defines arts and cultural assets at HBCUs as programs (academic and extra-curricular) and facilities that promote arts creation, arts participation, arts-related learning, and/or professional development involving the arts.

2M Research has been contracted by NEA to conduct 3 in depth case studies as part of this research study. Your institution has been selected as one of the three case study institutions. Today's virtual focus group is intended to provide (1) a more in-depth examination of the current state of arts and transdisciplinary programs and arts and cultural assets at the HBCUs, and (2) an improved understanding of the value of these assets to the surrounding community, including the social, cultural, and economic opportunities for residents and workers.

Our discussion will last approximately 90 minutes.

Your participation in the discussion today is voluntary. You may decline to answer any questions you do not wish to answer, and you may leave the conversation at any time with no negative consequences. Please note that your participation in this interview will not affect the outcome of any present or future National Endowment for the Arts grant applications, contract proposals, or cooperative agreement proposals.

To ensure we capture your comments and suggestions accurately, our discussion today is being audio recorded, and our research team is taking notes.

We will not include your name, or attribute your name to quotes, in documents that summarize these discussions.

With a show of hands, please acknowledge you understand.

Do you have any questions that I might answer before we proceed?

If there are no further questions, I am now going to take a brief pause to allow anyone to leave who no longer wishes to participate. [pause 15 seconds]

Section 1. The state of arts and cultural assets on- and off-campus.

1. To start off this discussion, I'd like to ask, in your opinion, how would you describe **INSTITUTION NAME'S** overall commitment to the arts?

The slide shows some arts and cultural assets our team identified at **INSTITUTION NAME**. We define arts and cultural assets as programs (academic and extra-curricular) and facilities that promote arts creation, arts participation, arts-related learning, and/or professional development involving the arts.

DURING THE FOCUS GROUP, 2M WILL SHARE OUR SCREEN WITH A SLIDE DETAILING IDENTIFIED ARTS AND CULTURAL ASSETS BY CATEGORY (E.G., ARTS DEPARTMENTS, VENUES, CLUBS, ETC.)

2. Are there any other shared assets or resources available to the students, faculty, and/or the local/regional community of **INSTITUTION NAME**?
 - a. Probe for **OFF-CAMPUS ASSETS SUCH AS**
 - i. Community partners
 - ii. Off-campus spaces
 - iii. Other off-campus assets
3. Are there any on the list that you would remove or deprioritize? If so, why?
4. Based on your knowledge and experience with the assets in the list or others that come to mind, what are some of the key needs and challenges connected with these assets?
 - a. Probe for
 - i. Programs
 - ii. Training
 - iii. Personnel
 - iv. Finances
 - v. Partnerships
 - vi. Venues
5. Among the arts and cultural assets that we discussed, can you identify assets that are key to supporting arts' integration with other sectors such as community development, healthcare, or STEM?
6. Our research has indicated that **INSTITUTION NAME** partners with (**INSERT ORGANIZATIONS IDENTIFIED FROM WEB SCAN AND SURVEY**) on initiatives and programs related to arts and culture. What are some of the benefits of these partnerships in your view? Are there other partners you would specifically mention that were not included in the list?

Section 2. Strategies to prepare students to meet local workforce needs.

7. How (if at all) does **INSTITUTION NAME** collect data on student employment after graduation?

The slide shows some high growth, arts-related occupations that we identified in the metro area of **INSTITUTION NAME**.

DURING THE FOCUS GROUP, 2M WILL SHARE OUR SCREEN WITH A SLIDE DETAILING IDENTIFIED HIGH GROWTH OCCUPATIONS BASED ON THE REGIONAL WORKFORCE ANALYSIS.

8. Based on your experience, in what ways are **INSTITUTION NAME** and its partners helping students to build the skills necessary continue their studies or work in areas related to these occupations or other arts-related occupations that you think are important?
 - a. Probe for
 - i. Transdisciplinary arts integration programs,
 - ii. STEAM initiatives,
 - iii. Providing students with makerspaces, incubators, or other coworking spaces
 - iv. Public policy and administration arts-related programs,
 - v. Partnerships with specific employers or industries
9. How does **INSTITUTION NAME** use the previously discussed existing arts and cultural assets in the community to contribute to local workforce needs related to these and other high-growth occupations?
 - a. Probe for
 - i. Partnerships
 - ii. Networks
 - iii. Initiatives
 - b. If unclear, probe for the type of occupation the respondents are referring to.
10. What, if any, future plans does **INSTITUTION NAME** have to use the previously discussed existing arts and cultural assets in the community to contribute to local workforce needs related to these and other high-growth occupations?
 - a. Probe for

- i. Partnerships
 - ii. Networks
 - iii. Initiatives
 - b. If unclear, probe for the type of occupation the respondents are referring to.
11. What challenges have you experienced or observed in helping students build the skills required to meet arts and cultural workforce development needs and to meet future high-growth employment areas?
- a. Probes:
 - i. What assets are needed to address challenges?
 - ii. What assets are needed to prepare graduates to meet *future* workforce needs?
12. Can you describe some outcomes of efforts/strategies/programs that build skills to meet arts and cultural workforce development needs and to meet future high-growth employment areas?
- a. Probe for
 - i. Improved employment outcomes for graduates
 - ii. Any established pipelines or partnerships that directly connect students/graduates with employment opportunities at partnering organizations

Section 3. HBCU supports and funding for arts.

13. What support or engagement does **INSTITUTION NAME** receive from LAAs/SAA/RAOs and what support is available?

DURING THE FOCUS GROUP, 2M WILL SHARE OUR SCREEN WITH A SLIDE DETAILING THE NAMES OF SOME OF THE IDENTIFIED LAAs/SAA/RAOs IN THE HBCU'S REGION.

- a. Probe for
 - i. Funding
 - ii. Technical assistance
 - iii. Partnerships
 - iv. Networks
14. Would you describe the amount of funding received from LAAs, SAAs, and RAOs for arts programming to be adequate? Why or why not?

- a. [If respondent did not think funding is adequate] In your opinion, why do you think there is a lack of adequate funding for arts programming?
 - i. Probe for
 - 1. Whether respondents are aware of funding/grant opportunities available
 - 2. Possible low amounts of funding offered; not enough funding offered in available opportunities to fund a desired project or activity
 - 3. Lack of capacity to research and apply for grants and funding opportunities
 - 4. Lack of grant/proposal writing knowledge among staff
15. How can funders at state and local levels improve the support offered to HBCU's for arts funding?
- a. Probe for
 - i. Technical assistance
 - ii. Resources such as FAQs or instruction guides
 - iii. Development of tools to easily find available funding opportunities
16. How can funders at state and local levels support community pipelines to and from HBCUs to create diverse, ongoing community partnerships?

Closing

Today we have discussed the state of the arts and cultural assets at **INSTITUTION NAME**, how **INSTITUTION NAME** and its partners prepare students to meet local arts and cultural workforce needs, and the art supports and funding available to **INSTITUTION NAME**.

Are there any comments you would like to add before we close today's conversation?

Thank you for taking time out of your busy day to talk with us today.