

Report on Network Feasibility Findings

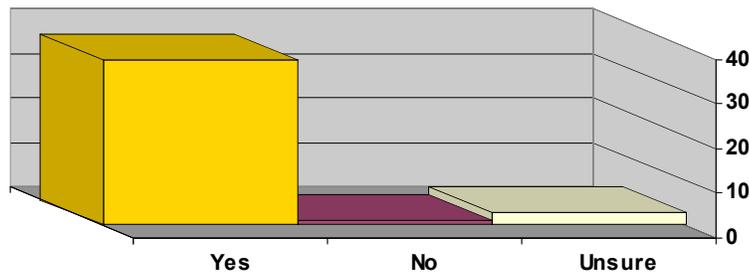
In order to identify the potential benefits of building a coalition of youth music orgs, the All Ages Movement Project asked the following questions via an online survey:

- Whether organizations would find a network useful
- What services a network could provide to its members
- What services organizations prioritized as most important
- What member organizations would be willing/able to contribute to the network in exchange
- Each organization's vision for a network, from services organizations hoped to see to overall outcomes of such a network

Here's what you said!

Results

Out of 41 organizations who responded, 37, or **90%** agreed that a national network of youth music and art organizations is a good idea. One organization did not think a network is a good idea, and three were not sure.¹



Services Desired

Each organization filling out the survey was given a list of six potential services to choose from as services their organization would like to see offered by a network to its members, as well as an option to write in a choice not included in the list. This list included an online directory with profiles of organizations, regional and national gatherings for member organizations, resource sharing and problem solving, a centralized support staff, and trainings which would address specific problems encountered by member organizations.

- Out of the 22 complete and partial responses, **all but one organization desired an online directory** (21 organizations or **95%**), and 18 or 81% felt that trainings would be useful.

¹ In collecting information on individual organizations, we also asked them whether they felt a network would be beneficial; hence, the number of organizations who agreed, disagreed, or were unsure consists of results gathered from two surveys.

- The next most popular response was split between regional and national gatherings, with 14 organizations (63%) desiring this service.
- Of interest to 13 organizations each (59%) was the option of a centralized support staff and open source resource sharing.
- Four of the 22 organizations who responded to the survey had additional ideas on services which should be offered by a network, which included artist networking and resources, help with fundraising campaigns, and volunteer or internship programs.

To summarize, an online directory was by far the most popular potential service organizations feel would be beneficial, and out of the services listed, **over half** thought that each one of the services listed should be provided by a national network.

3. What services should a national network provide to members?			
Online directory with profiles of organizations		21	95%
Regional gatherings of organizations doing similar work in similar areas		14	63%
National gatherings for all organizations in the network		14	63%
Open source, open space resource sharing & problem solving		13	59%
Centralized staff to provide timely resources to people involved or interested in starting their own organizations		13	59%
Trainings in subjects that pertain to specific challenges to staff, volunteers, board members, and other folks in this field		18	81%
Other, Please SpecifyView Responses		5	22%

What Members Could Provide

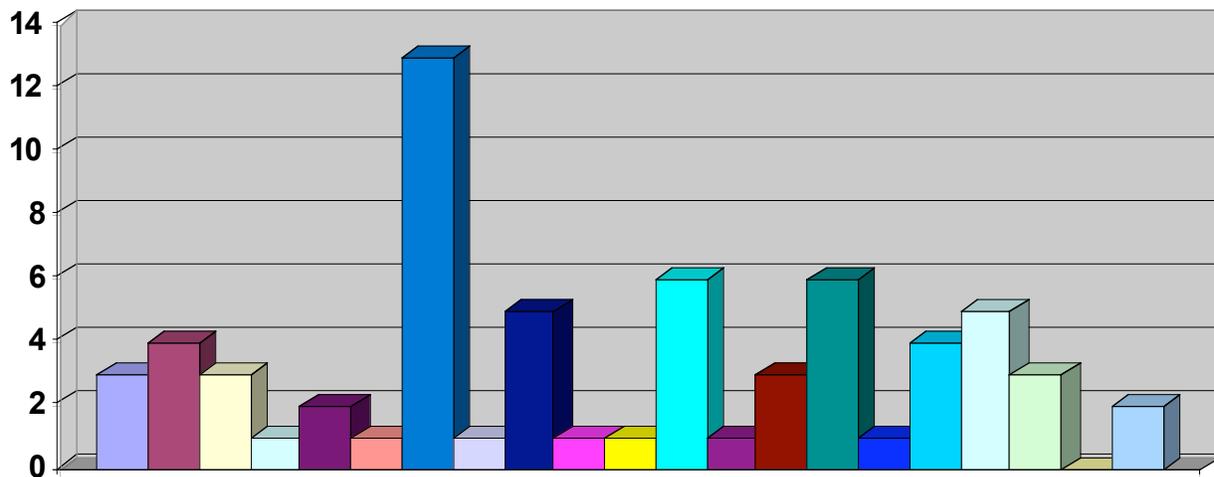
In addition to asking what services organizations wanted a network to provide to its members, AMP asked what members would be willing or able to provide back to the network.

- Most organizations (18 or 85%) thought it would be possible for members to update and maintain their organization’s profile.
- 17 respondents (80%) envisioned member participation in holding trainings at conferences or as needed by other members.
- Fourteen organizations (66%) thought providing consulting in problem-solving or startup to other members would be possible.
- The least popular response was member fees, with only six organizations, or 28%, selecting this as an option. This result could be related to the fact that a large number of organizations who responded to the survey are non-profit, so it’s possible that many organizations don’t see room for any increase in expenses.
- In the open-ended response option, one organization also suggested that members could provide sample documents, such as letters, grants, bylaws, curriculums, etc.
- One point to note with this portion of the survey is that there was no distinction made between an organization supporting an idea philosophically versus estimating its own ability to provide a particular service.

5. What services could MEMBERS provide to the network:			
Update and maintain organization profile information		18	85%
Consulting to people looking for help in starting their own organization or in problem solving		14	66%
Trainings at conferences or as needed by other members		17	80%
Member Fees		6	28%
Other, Please Specify/View Responses		2	9%

Vision

At the end of each network feasibility survey, respondents were asked a question regarding their vision for a network of youth-run cultural organizations. Out of 22 respondents, 21 organizations had a specific vision which addressed a wide range of ideas, from what services a network could or should provide, to how a network would be beneficial to youth cultural organizations or youth in general, and even long-term, overarching ideas such as with regard to the impact a network could have on the overall socio-cultural landscape of America.



 Increased long-term sustainability	 Start-up help
 Support staff/consultation	 Online resources
 Access to funders	 Networking with potential partners
 Information/resource/idea sharing	 Potential increase in similar orgs
 Potential change in political/cultural climate	 Trainings
 Gatherings/conferences	 Networking with similar orgs
 Resource-sharing (physical)	 Organizational models
 Resource for artists/musicians	 Centralized source of information
 Youth agency	 Moral support/inspiration
 Increase in youth civic/cultural engagement	 Promotion/public relations
 Resource for young music fans/participants	

Here's what we found out:

- **We want to learn.** The main thing organizations would like to get out of a network would be access to information/resources and ideas from other organizations.

- **We want allies, peers, and role models.** Many organizations mention the potential for networking with other organizations as something which interests them, as well as the possibility for the network to act as a resource for artists and musicians.
- **We want support.** Several see the potential for the network to provide moral, administrative, and technical support and inspiration for organizations such as theirs.
- **We are powerful.** Many organizations see the network as increasing the possibility that we can make a difference in our world.

Here are some of the things you had to say about what you want to gain from a network:

“The most frequently asked question I get is 'How can I start something like this in my town and how is your operation set up?' A centralized resource for answers to these types of questions would be very beneficial to people looking to set up their own organization.” – *Mike Riley from Charm City Art Space in Baltimore, MD*

“A stronger base for political and social change that erupts from within through education and engagement of young people with issues that effect them; local, regional, national and international partnerships, coalitions, and coordination that extends beyond simply cross-advertising; more and better spaces for young people to converge close to their home and create their own org arts/culture change across the country; more and better support for upstart projects and events as they emerge (including those that don't necessarily fit or want to fit into a traditional non-profit model.” – *Cindy Peterson from Kirkland Teen Center in Kirkland, WA*

“To improve our society by improving the lives of young people - A national network could be a remarkable resource for everyone. In fact, we are currently attempting to put together a model for other communities to replicate what we have done here. I also think that a national Coalition would enable us to reach foundations and private philanthropists that we might not be able to on our own. An "ask" of support from a national group to a record lable, artist, or media group would carry much more weight” - *Brad Wilhelm from Rhino's Youth Center in Bloomington, IN*

“I think it would be fantastic to have a coalition of these places. it would benefit everyone. from people booking shows to the folks running the shows. it would be a great way to exchange ideas and tips with people that are getting started or just have a problem.” – *Aaron Hamilton from Cave9 Music and Arts Project in Birmingham, AL*

“To provide stability, structure, and preserve models of youth-run and oriented spaces. To encourage new spaces/groups by making the start-up process easier, and to sustain existing spaces.” – *Rock Paper Scissors Collective in Oakland, CA*

“A more sustainable arts culture in the US, more alternatives to corporate controlled media culture (extending especially to "red states" and other culturally isolated areas), more youth civic engagement, a more vibrant and diverse cultural ecology, and a renewed sense of political ideology/mission within the independent music/arts scene.” – *Kevin Erickson from Department of Safety in Anacortes, WA*

Summary

Most organizations expressed interest in an open-source online directory which will allow us to interact directly with each other and build relationships. In addition to allowing us to exchange ideas with one another, many organizations felt that a network would provide moral support and inspiration – something of great benefit to organizations operating with little manpower and resources. Overall, most organizations who responded to the survey felt that a network would increase the growth and stability of each organization, as well as encourage growth in the number of organizations doing the same work. Based on what you told us, it seems that the easiest first step to creating the network would be to start with an online directory to which organizations can add and update information individually. Using an open-source directory as a foundation, we can take the crucial first step of building relationships with one another, modeling the kind of collaboration that underlies our work. Through developing relationships, this coalition can begin to address the specific needs of this community of organizations, identifying collective goals and working towards them through a national infrastructure.