

# ENGAGING PLACEMAKING FOR INNOVATIVE COMMUNITIES (EPIC)

*Pilot Program 2023*

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

**Engaging Placemaking for Innovative Communities (EPIC)** is an opportunity for arts-driven community development projects designed to connect cross-sector local and regional stakeholders. EPIC provides technical assistance, funding, and mentorship through planning and execution.

Through EPIC, cohorts will:

- Learn how creative placemaking and arts-based development impacts community development
- Foster cross-sector local and regional partnerships
- Understand and implement equitable community engagement
- Implement an arts-driven project that aligns with individual community goals

EPIC is a two-phase pilot program that uses cross-sector cohorts to establish regional networks through resource sharing, process building, and technical assistance for arts and culture-driven community development.

**Phase 1** includes in-person sessions introducing creative placemaking processes, asset mapping, priority setting, and project planning.

**Phase 1-2 Bridge** will culminate with the design of an arts-driven project involving Kansas artists to collaborate with, a progress plan, budget, and additional funding strategies. Communities will use these materials to apply for Phase 2 funding.

In **Phase 2**, community cohorts work with EPIC staff to receive ongoing mentorship, project support, and technical assistance from the regional peer network.

*EPIC 2023 is a pilot program funded by the Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission at the Kansas Department of Commerce and the Patterson Family Foundation.*

## WHAT IS CREATIVE PLACEMAKING?

“In **creative placemaking**, partners from public, private, non-profit and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, tribe, city or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired.” (*Creative Placemaking: How to Do It Well*, Ann Markusen, Anne Gadwa Nicodemus)

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

EPIC aims to achieve the following goals and objectives for communities:

1. Identify community assets, needs, and priorities.
2. Work with cross-sector local and regional cohorts for equitable community engagement and partnership to grow peer and resource networks.
3. Develop a broad understanding of arts, culture, and design and its impact on community and economic development
4. Understand best practices of creative placemaking and community engagement from an approach that centers on belonging, dignity, justice, and joy.
5. Expand necessary tools for navigating future challenges associated with placemaking and equitable community engagement.
6. Prepare communities to be ready for future project funding opportunities with a strategic vision for local development informed by their unique understanding of assets and resources in their community.

## ELIGIBILITY

A representative from any Kansas public, private or non-profit organization can apply for this program in the following counties: Barton, Harvey, McPherson, Pratt, Kingman, Stafford, Rice, and Reno counties.

To participate, a community or region will select six people to be part of a cross-sector cohort. The cohorts will participate in both phases from start to finish. Each cohort will have representation from numerous points of view from a community. Community contacts will work with EPIC staff to finalize cohort groups, recommended sectors for consideration include:

- **Civic:** city/government, elected official, staff
- **Cultural:** arts, humanities, etc.
- **Economic:** chamber, economic development org, Main Street/downtown, etc.
- **Philanthropic:** community foundation, etc.
- **Sector specific:** education, health, transportation, etc.
- **Underserved/CD:** minority, youth, low-income, etc.

*Note: the community cohort does not need to be established or designed before applying to EPIC. Cohorts are encouraged to include individuals or group representatives who have not traditionally been involved in community and economic development.*

## TENTATIVE TIMELINE

**Phase 1:** April – June 2023 (specific session dates will be determined in collaboration with the host community and cohort)

**Phase 1-2 Bridge:** late Summer 2023

**Phase 2:** Fall 2023 – June 2024

## **MATCH REQUIREMENT**

Communities are required to demonstrate investment in projects by providing a minimum of 25% cash match. The cash match must be secured before beginning Phase 2. A single entity must be selected to serve as the primary contact for grant funding for the projects. This entity will be responsible for submitting required material and will be the entity legally obligated to the terms of an agreement if awarded funding. Once Phase 2 project funding is agreed upon, a Letter of Agreement will be issued from the Department of Commerce.

## **ELIGIBLE PROJECTS**

Eligible community projects are diverse and must include significant involvement from artists, artisans, creative entrepreneurs. Projects could be: festivals, performances, public art, public space revitalization, neighborhood development, community engagement, implementing arts into infrastructure, transportation, housing, youth development, tourism

## **INELIGIBLE PROJECTS**

Ineligible projects include the following types of activities: capital projects, major construction or renovation, non-arts project, fundraiser, or benefit event

## **BEST PRACTICES**

For success in EPIC, the following best practices are encouraged for cohorts to instill:

1. Brainstorm potential projects, spaces, and programming that could be explored in EPIC without establishing a roadmap or tunnel vision for the program.
2. Focus cohort recruitment on individuals who exhibit the following qualities: creative energy, experimental mindset, active listener, and enthusiastic collaborator.

## **QUESTIONS**

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