

# National Theater Project Evaluation Report

McNeil Creative Enterprises

March 17, 2023



NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

*Phantom Limb Company, Photo Credit: Richard Termine*



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) is one of six regional arts organizations established with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. Each program and project that is brought to life at NEFA is created with the underlying goal of building a stronger and more dynamic infrastructure for the arts. In 2010, NEFA piloted the National Theater Project (NTP), modeled on NEFA's National Dance Project. NTP supports innovative devised and ensemble theater artists with building a network of organizations committed to strengthening opportunities and cultivating audiences for their work. Since 2012, NTP has not only provided funding but also has cultivated an informed, interactive network of producing theaters, presenters, and ensembles that promote the funded projects and the development of the field as a whole.

NTP supports work that reflects the evolving environment for theater, including but not limited to projects that:

- Support the creation/development and United States' touring of new artist-led devised, ensemble theater<sup>2</sup> works that demonstrate excellence in the artists' practice.
- Support work that contributes to the cultural and aesthetic diversities<sup>3</sup> of today's theater.
- Reflect meaningful partnerships with presenters, producers, and other organizations that are involved in the development, promotion, and/or touring of the new work.
- Offer the potential to deepen engagement because of the work's relevance, originality, and/or timeliness.
- Produce a viable plan for touring the supported work in multiple communities in the U.S. and its territories.



2019 NTP Grantee Cohort Meeting in Knoxville, TN, Photo Credit: NTP Staff

In January 2022, NEFA hired McNeil Creative Enterprises (MCE) to examine and document the impact of NTP over the last ten years. MCE worked closely with NTP's staff utilizing a participatory research approach to frame the evaluation goals, data collection priorities, and the modes of analysis.

MCE designed and launched a process evaluation to assist NEFA with the following study goals:

1. Document if and how NTP met its program goals;
2. Document what's worked well and the potential areas for improvement;
3. Identify and track the most applicable NTP performance measures; and
4. Illustrate how NEFA can sustain its EDIA commitment and priorities.

Since its inception, NTP has administered 13 Creation and Touring grant cycles. Between its primary grant programs, NTP has awarded \$10,662,700 to 96 Creation and Touring Grant Projects and \$2,777,945 to 51 Presentation grants to help host a tour stop for an NTP project.

MCE applauds NEFA for recognizing the role that devised theater plays in amplifying artist voices. NTP purposefully centers the artist/artist ensemble at the heart of its program design. All planning efforts are delivered to ensure that the work is toured in partnership with presenters across the country. NTP is also intentional about ensuring that all NTP stakeholders are positively impacted by their participation in the program. NTP staff knew that the funding was always meant to be just one component of the program experience. This study found that to be true. In fact, over the years NTP significantly impacted its stakeholders in the following ways:

#### **Creation and Touring Grantees (Artists/Artist Ensembles)**

- Artists feel empowered and have the financial resources and professional network to do their work.
- There is an expanded audience for their work.
- New and meaningful partnerships exist amongst NTP artists, presenters, tour managers and staff.
- Artist development support helps to refine ideas for production.
- Proposal writing support helps artists better articulate their work.
- Additional funding and touring opportunities are created for their work.
- There is a new found legitimacy or appreciation for their work.
- Long term residencies and partnerships exist beyond NTP.
- They've had the opportunity, in some cases, to tour their work for the first time.

#### **NTP Presenters**

- There is an increased awareness about devised ensemble theater artists.
- There are culturally and aesthetically diverse stories being told in venues across the country.
- New and meaningful partnerships exist amongst NTP artists, presenters, tour managers and staff.
- The types of venues used to present theater expands to include non-traditional spaces.
- Long term residencies and partnerships exist beyond NTP.
- There are deepened connections to the communities and audiences that surround their venues.
- They've presented a group/work they would not have presented otherwise.
- There are continued relationships with the community organizations that were involved with the NTP project they presented.

#### **NTP Advisors**

- There is an increased awareness about devised ensemble theater artists.
- Dominant theater norms are challenged and reconsidered through the panel deliberation process.
- New and meaningful partnerships exist amongst NTP artists, presenters, tour managers and staff.
- There is an increased understanding about the identity and social justice messages of devised theater ensembles.
- There are continued relationships with other presenters they met through the NTP.
- They continue to serve as a resource of information and other types of support for the NTP ecosystem.
- They've become an advocate for devised theater because of this experience.

“ NTP always filled a void in the field. Funds for original and devised work are scarce. Funds for touring and developing relationships with the community is rare. Their work [NTP] is community engaged and place based. This was a major grant offering serious resources for our work. There are few if any programs doing the same work.

—NTP Artist

NTP leadership has been able to ensure that equity, diversity, intersectionality and access (EDIA) remains at the forefront of program activities and developments. Through its primary and ancillary grant programs, NTP has created space for other theater groups to access funding and spaces that elevate the work of underrepresented groups in theater. The NTP staff's direction, responsiveness and availability to program participants have carried the success of the program at each step. Their emphasis on shared leadership to determine what's needed for program enhancement resulted in high level learning, deep appreciation, and ongoing commitment to the program among stakeholders.

NTP's program design proves that collaborative planning and support creates benefits for everyone involved and develops a sense of social cohesion. This evaluation demonstrated that the benefits offered by this program go far beyond financial capital.

The growth opportunities that emerged during the evaluation — if implemented — will enable NTP and ultimately NEFA to be even more effective and efficient in achieving its goals. It is our hope that the strategic considerations provided (and in greater detail in the report) support NTP's efforts to support sustainable growth and a strong vision for the future of the program.

### Strategic Considerations for the Future

1. Streamline and expand NTP's recordkeeping practices so that it's aligned with NTP's mission.
2. Send a formal notice directly to presenters about NTP Finalists and Creation and Touring Grantees.
3. Host a resource bank and/or alumni network for NTP Stakeholders.
4. Diversify and expand fundraising sources to align with the program's evolution and needs.
5. Extend the length of the advisor and coaching orientation.
6. Create a formalized NTP Creation and Touring grantee / presenter guide to clarify role expectations and improve the working relationship between the artist ensemble and presenter.
7. Expand the grant monitoring and reporting measures to include holistic performance indicators that will assist with documenting the financial, social and intellectual capital built into the program's goals.
8. Review and reallocate staff time and resources to prevent burnout.

The following report illustrates the impact and evolution of the National Theater Project since its formal launch in 2012.

## BACKGROUND

The New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) is one of six regional arts organizations established with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. NEFA's programs support artists across many forms of expression and many geographies, connecting them with collaborators and communities, fueling creative exchange and public discourse, and strengthening the creative economy. Each program and project that is brought to life at NEFA is created with the underlying goal of building a stronger and more dynamic infrastructure for the arts. NEFA's grantmaking, convenings, network building, online tools, and data-driven research all support its mission to invest in artists and communities and foster equitable access to the arts, while enriching the cultural landscape in New England and the nation.

In 2009, supported by The Mellon Foundation (Mellon), NEFA conducted a study which identified unrealized potential for theater projects that expand the boundaries of theater in the United States. Multi-disciplinary presenters, theaters, and audiences nationwide demonstrated an appetite for artist-led, ensemble, and devised theater work. In 2010, the National Theater Project (NTP), modeled on NEFA's National Dance Project, was piloted with funding from Mellon to test questions and assumptions about theater development and touring in the United States. Central goals for the NTP pilot were to support developing productions to tour and to support presenters, ensembles, and producing theaters to take the work to different regions and audiences. In 2012, again with the support of The Mellon Foundation, NEFA launched the National Theater Project to build on the knowledge gained through the pilot phase and provide a critical means of support of artist-led, ensemble, and devised theater work. The National Theater Project was made possible with lead funding from Mellon and additional support from the Doris Duke Foundation. Today, NTP supports innovative devised and ensemble theater artists with building a network of organizations committed to strengthening opportunities and cultivating audiences for their work. NTP not only provides funding but also animates an informed, interactive network of producing theaters, presenters, and ensembles that promote the funded projects and the development of the field as a whole. Projects are supported through Creation & Touring Grants, which fund creation and preparation for touring of devised projects, and Presentation Grants, which are awarded to presenters at the discretion of the artist and support up to 50% of the artistic fee for NTP projects.

NTP supports work that reflects the evolving environment for theater, including but not limited to projects that:

- Support the creation/development and United States<sup>1</sup> touring of new artist-led devised, ensemble theater<sup>2</sup> works that demonstrate excellence in the artists' practice.
- Support work that contributes to the cultural and aesthetic diversities<sup>3</sup> of today's theater.
- Reflect meaningful partnerships with presenters, producers, and other organizations that are involved in the development, promotion, and/or touring of the new work.
- Offer the potential to deepen engagement because of the work's relevance, originality, and/or timeliness.
- Produce a viable plan for touring the supported work in multiple communities in the U.S. and its territories.

This report will examine how NTP has evolved since its inception and the impact it's had amongst its desired stakeholders.



*Phantom Limb Company, Photo Credit: Richard Termine*

# METHODOLOGY

In January 2022<sup>4</sup>, NEFA hired McNeil Creative Enterprises (MCE) to examine and document the impact of NTP over the last twelve years. MCE worked closely with NTP's staff utilizing a participatory research approach to frame the evaluation goals, data collection priorities, and the modes of analysis. MCE designed and launched a process evaluation to assist NEFA with the following study goals:

1. Document if and how NTP met its program goals;
2. Document what's worked well and the potential areas for improvement;
3. Identify and track the most applicable NTP performance measures; and
4. Illustrate how NEFA can sustain its equity, diversity, intersectionality, and accessibility (EDIA) commitment and priorities.

The logic model that appears in Figure 1 below is a framework that was designed to describe how NTP has focused its work, provided coherence across tasks, and differentiated among activities, results, and outcomes for its vision. This vision shaped NTP's operations. MCE used this framework as a guide for evaluating this program. MCE invites the NTP staff to continue to use this evaluative tool to reflect on program progress, tweak program inputs and activities, and monitor changes that result from their efforts.

**FIGURE 1: NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT LOGIC MODEL**

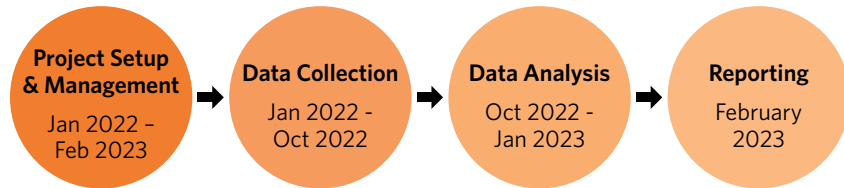




MCE prioritized a multi-tiered approach to examining the evaluation’s study goals. MCE believes that in order to truly understand the impact of a program one must take a holistic look at all program aspects that contribute to the program’s evolution. Through a document review, interviews, surveys, and regular meetings with NTP’s leadership, MCE was able to produce insights and offer strategic considerations to support NTP’s continued efforts in support of artist-led, ensemble, and devised theater work.

MCE designed and conducted a four-phase evaluation (see Figure 2) to fulfill the objectives noted above. Data collection for this evaluation began in January 2022 and concluded in October 2022.

**FIGURE 2: NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT EVALUATION PLANNING PROCESS**



Data collected included both qualitative and quantitative data, and were examined both within and across stakeholder groups (e.g., artist, presenter, staff, advisor and funder etc.). The prioritized data collection techniques used for this evaluation are listed below in Table 1.

**TABLE 1: METHODS TO UNDERSTAND NTP’S KEY COMPONENTS AND STAKEHOLDER EXPERIENCES**

✓ Document Review	✓ Program Survey
✓ Evaluation Framework Planning Session	✓ Stakeholder Interviews
✓ Monthly Meetings with the NTP staff	

The document review, evaluation framework planning session and monthly meetings with NTP staff familiarized MCE with the program’s intentions, key stakeholders, and the program’s evolution and activities. A complete list of the materials reviewed can be found in Appendix A.

To complement the data collected above, MCE administered an online survey (via Survey Monkey) that examined program participation and experience since NTP’s inception. The survey was sent to all individuals noted in NTP’s grant records, including

artists, presenters, theater producers, and advisors. See the details about the survey respondent rates below in Table 2.

**TABLE 2: NTP PROGRAM SURVEY PARTICIPATION OVERVIEW**

NTP Role	Number of Survey Recipients	Number of Survey Respondents	Response Rate
Finalist Only	86	28	33%
Grantee Only	93	33	35%
Advisors Only	47	8	16%
Presenters Only	301	37	12%
Multiple Roles	NA <sup>5</sup>	24	NA
Total	528	130	25%

As you can see in the above table, survey data showed it was not uncommon for NTP’s stakeholder groups to occupy multiple roles within the NTP ecosystem. For example, a former Creation and Touring Grantee later became a NTP advisor, or a presenter that partnered with a Creation and Touring Grantee later became a NTP advisor. Conversations with the NTP staff indicated that the overlap was by design. NTP’s rationale for the overlap was to regularly ensure that devised theater had advocates and supporters that understood the artistic work, were familiar with the artists and their needs and could provide sufficient support and community building opportunities within the discipline. Additionally, this approach in some cases assisted NTP artists/ advisors with applying for Creation and Touring Grants in the future. Given the deliberate and intentional overlap of NTP stakeholder roles, it was important that MCE interviewed NTP stakeholders that occupied a variety of roles in the programs over the years to see if NTP’s theory about advocacy and support was true. This program design informed MCE’s choice to employ a purposive sampling method for the interviews.

Using insights from the document review, program survey data, and conversations with NTP staff, MCE designed interview protocols and conducted 45 sixty minute interviews with stakeholders representing a variety of roles within the NTP ecosystem. The types of stakeholder groups interviewed appear below in Table 3.

**TABLE 3: TYPES OF NTP STAKEHOLDER GROUPS INTERVIEWED**

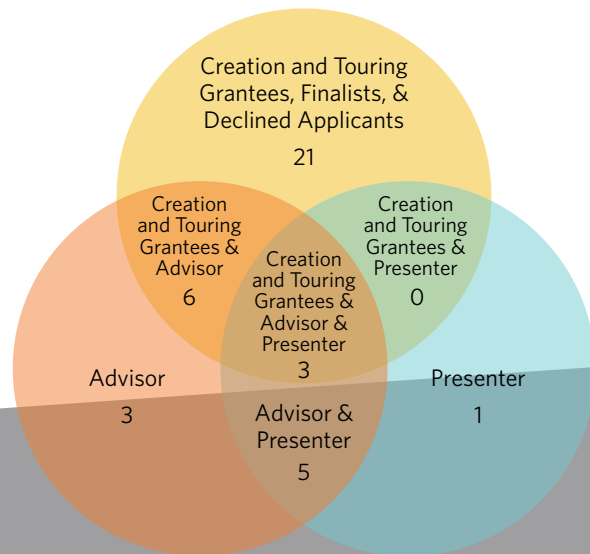
✓ Creation and Touring Grantees	✓ NTP Presenters
✓ Artists that Applied for NTP Funding but Didn’t Receive It	✓ Creation and Touring Finalists
✓ NTP Staff	✓ NTP Advisors
	✓ NTP Funders

The stakeholder interviews were designed to provide a more in-depth understanding about the inner workings and experiences of those who participated in the program over the years. All participating stakeholder names are listed in Appendix B.

The venn diagram in Figure 3 below aims to illustrate the NTP roles of the people interviewed for this study. The orange circle represents those interviewed who solely served as NTP advisors. The yellow circle illustrates those interviewed who were Creation & Touring grantees, finalists and declined applicants. The blue circle illustrates those interviewed who were solely NTP presenters. The circles that overlap below indicate those NTP stakeholders who held multiple roles in the NTP ecosystem<sup>6</sup>. In other words, MCE interviewed 6 people who were both Creation & Touring grantees and advisors; 5 people who were NTP advisors and presenters; and 3 people who were Creation & Touring grantees, advisors, and presenters.

Between October 2022 - December 2022, MCE utilized a mixed methods approach to analyze the program data and obtain a better understanding of the program's evolution.

**FIGURE 3: NTP ROLES OF THE STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWEES**



## STUDY LIMITATIONS

MCE was successful in capturing varied stakeholder perspectives for this study. Because this study examined a 10 year period, recall and reflection can be challenging. Focus groups with 6-8 study participants that were engaged in NTP during the same time periods would have potentially increased the likelihood of recall. However, participant scheduling made it difficult to facilitate the focus groups originally designed to capture program experiences during NTP's evolution. Instead, MCE expanded the interview sample to include those set aside for focus groups.

Additionally, when compiling the interview sample, MCE targeted insights from individuals who were represented throughout the entire NTP ecosystem including individuals who occupied multiple roles. However, there were nuances in NTP's recordkeeping so the data available on NTP stakeholders were inconsistent. MCE relied on the NTP staff to close the gaps along the way, recognizing that some of the discrepancies were due to the fact that some institutions had multiple subsidiaries under their name with unique EINs that were supported by NTP. In other cases, grant award decisions (e.g., finalist, awardee, decline) were documented differently over time. These nuances were difficult to detect to an external observer of the records.


Finally, prior to 2015, a different system was used to store NTP data and the NTP data points (i.e., name, race, etc.) tracked evolved over time. So while the same type of information is accessible between 2015-2022, data before that time period - that aligned with this evaluation's goals- was not as easy to access and report.

Readers should consider these limitations while reviewing the findings.


# FINDINGS

This section aims to describe NTP’s ecosystem, program structure, stakeholder experience and impact in the theater field.

**NTP has administered 13 Creation and Touring grant cycles.**  
 Between NTP’s primary grant programs



**\$10,662,700**  
to 96 Creation and Touring Grant Projects



**\$2,777,945** to 51  
Presentation grants to help host a tour stop for an NTP project

## THE NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT ECOSYSTEM

All stakeholders aligned with NTP fulfill a distinct role (see Figure 4) that when considered as a whole ecosystem, contribute to NTP being able to achieve its desired goals. The NTP stakeholders include the (1) NTP staff, (2) NTP funders, (3) artists, (4) advisors, and (5) NTP presenting partners. Details regarding each role appear in Table 4 below.

**FIGURE 4: STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN NTP ACTIVITIES**



2014 NTP Grantee Cohort Meeting in San Francisco, CA, Photo Credit: NTP Team



NTP Staff at a NTP Grant Panel Meeting in Salt Lake City, UT, Photo Credit: NTP Panelist



Quita Sullivan, NTP Senior Program Director, Theater, during an NTP Retreat, Photo Credit: NTP Team

**TABLE 4: STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

Stakeholder	Role	Significance	Types of Affiliation
Funders	Provide critical funding that allows for administration, programming and expansion of NTP.	The NTP program and its reach is limited in its capacity without external grants.	Philanthropic Organizations (Mellon & Duke)
NTP Staff	Provide visionary NTP leadership and management, administer/implement NTP grants and activities, and provide support, guidance, and information to all stakeholders.	The NTP program components (e.g., advising, funding, convening, site visits) invited all within the NTP ecosystem to expand thinking, learn new techniques and strategies, and push boundaries to reflect the cultural and aesthetic diversity of today's theater.	Senior Program Director (Quita Sullivan), Program Officer (Derek Schwartz), Deputy Director (Jane Preston), Consultant/Former Senior Program Manager (Meena Malik), Program Officer (Leilani Ricardo)
Advisors	Advise artists in the application phase of the program and make decisions on who receives the grant.	Advisors review and provide critical feedback to applicants in the two-phase selection process and make decisions on who receives the grants. Some advisors continue to mentor the awarded projects through cohort meetings or additional consultation at will. The role is designed as a 3 year appointment, then advisors rotate off to allow for new and diverse perspectives. Selection of advisors takes into account geography, gender, cultural and racial equity and includes new and established leaders in the field.	Arts professionals from presenting or producing organizations, theater artists, and other theater professionals.
Artist	Artist ensembles who bring their newly devised work to NTP to seek out funding and guidance for artistic development, tour planning and administration support for their projects.	Artists receive funding and direct support to assist with pushing the boundaries and aesthetic for theater. They are given an opportunity to grow, receive guidance, artistic development support and partner with theater professionals on their work.	U.S.-based theater ensembles and individual theater artists with identified collaborators.
Presenters	Arts presenters, including producing theaters and other organizations, considering touring NTP projects.	Presenters and other producing organizations may commit to produce NTP ensembles ensuring that Creation and Touring grantees are able to tour their completed work. Since the Pilot years, the participation and commitment of presenters provides new production opportunities, professional guidance, artistic development support, and new relationships to NTP artist ensembles.	U.S. organizations that are eligible to receive NTP presentation grants. They include LORT/Regional Theaters, University Presenters, Presenters with Alternative Spaces, & Festivals.
Development Partner	They are instrumental in supporting the artist while they develop their work. They are selected by the artist and included in the preliminary and final application to propose the concept for the artist's work.	The development partners provide a variety of resources during the development of a work including, but not limited to, residency space, virtual platforms, audience for work-in-progress showings, administrative guidance or support, marketplace advocacy, tour planning assistance, and the leveraging of additional funds for the project. It is understood that the need and level of assistance between development partners and artists varies from artist to artist, but NTP believes strongly that partnerships greatly benefit the development and distribution of devised, ensemble theater. The development partners do not receive funding from NTP.	Presenters, artists, other organizations

**Another important, yet informal stakeholder, is NEFA's National Dance Project (NDP) staff. The NDP is the first iteration of a successful creation and touring grant program model by NEFA. NTP staff worked closely with NDP staff to tweak NTP's design to make it more equitable and possible for ensembles/artists to apply to both programs.**



*Mondo Bizarro, Photo Credit: Unknown*

## NTP STRUCTURE: 2010-2022

Over the last 10 years, this program has evolved significantly to ensure that devised ensemble work has a place to thrive. Through the years, every program shift and enhancement has been done to ensure that there is a space for artists to create the work that they want to create while growing and remaining sustainable. The NTP program understands that it cannot be all things to the artist. However, they have purposefully created a container of support, awareness and advocacy for all within the NTP ecosystem. Today, NTP's ecosystem is carefully curated by NTP's Senior Program Director and is responsive to the ongoing needs of its stakeholders. Before one can understand NTP's impact, it's helpful to understand how its structure has evolved since its launch.

Below, NTP's structure and its evolution is described in detail.

### NTP Staff

The NTP staff are responsible for thoughtfully guiding and delivering this program. They provide:

- program leadership and management
- program administration and implementation
- support and guidance for all NTP stakeholders

When this program was in its pilot phase, there were no full-time staff members dedicated to the program. The current Senior Program Director was on staff at the time as a part-time manager. As the program evolved, that program manager role evolved into a director role. With that shift came a lot more oversight and responsibility for the program's vision and grantmaking priorities. With the shift in roles came a shift in focus, team members (then part-time staff that became full time staff), and program design. Today, there are three full time staff members and a contractor that formerly supported the program for 8 years. The most tenured staff member has been on the NTP team for over 10 years and the last NTP team member joined the team in Fall 2022.



The majority of the existing NTP staff have been working on the program for at least 4 years which demonstrates an ongoing commitment to this work. NTP's Senior Program Director has been instrumental in making equity, diversity and inclusion a core value for NTP. NTP's leadership brought new voices, varied identities, expanded thinking and funding to the forefront. As noted in the sections below, the NTP team via its grantmaking approach broke down the barriers to access, relied on trust, and ensured that NTP's staff was available, responsive, and forward thinking for NTP's stakeholders. NTP's equity and advocacy efforts were embedded in the program's operations long before NEFA adopted equity, diversity and intersectionality as a priority for the organization. NTP's leadership and management over the last 5 years has relied on and prioritized collaboration and cohesion as a means to reach its goals. Their efforts, however, come at a cost. The NTP team has reached its capacity to effectively administer this program. The program's future relies on the ability of the staff to continue and build on its efforts.

### NTP's Fundamental Grants

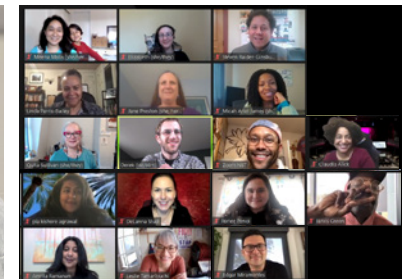
Three grants have been fundamental to NTP since the beginning:

- **Creation and Touring grants** — designed for the devised and ensemble artists to create work
- **Presentation grants** — designed for presenters and other non-profit organizations to present the work of Creation & Touring ensembles
- **Presenter Travel grants** — designed for presenters to travel and see the Creation & Touring ensemble work

Over the years, while aiming to effectively fulfill NTP's goals, NTP's staff listened intently to its stakeholders (i.e., artists, advisors, presenters, NDP staff) to ensure that NTP's program design was responsive, diverse, equitable, and intersectional. This meant that program elements like advisor support, application criteria, financial support, and grantee gatherings (i.e., regional convenings, cohort meetings) evolved since the project's inception. An overview of that evolution is documented below.



*Candace Feldman and Muriel Miguel, Photo Credit: NTP Team*

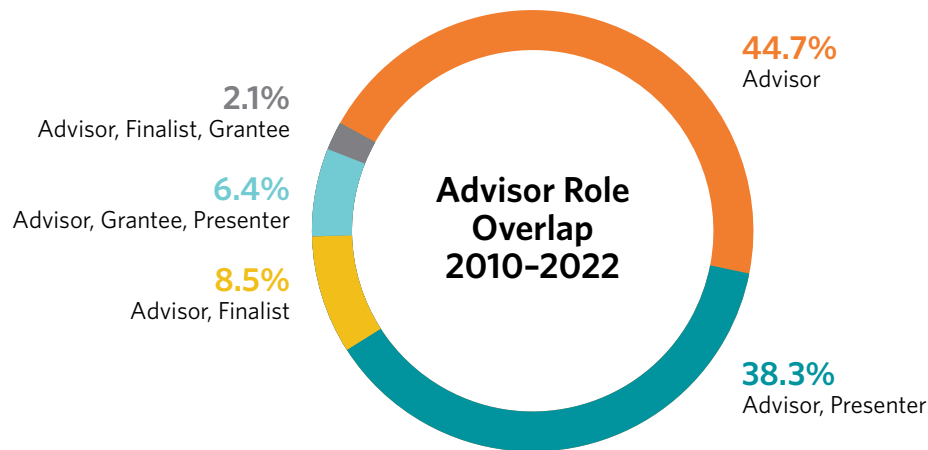


*Virtual Panel Meeting during COVID-19, Photo Credit: NTP Team*

## NTP Advisors

The NTP advisors are invited to serve staggered 3 year terms in the program. Advisors are invited through a formal invitation because they are believed to be able to offer significant guidance to support the artists involved in the program and make informed decisions on who receives the grant. Part of NTP's original framework relied heavily on inviting advisors that worked professionally as presenters. At the time, NTP staff believed that their insight would be instrumental in building relationships between artists and presenters. Over time, and before NEFA made it an organization-wide priority, NTP placed greater emphasis on equity, diversity, intersectionality and access (EDIA) in their advisor recruitment process. The NTP Program Director led this charge by purposefully recruiting advisors with varied professional and personal (including ethnic, ability/disability, and minoritized) backgrounds who lived and worked across the United States. Artists who had been Creation and Touring grantees and/or finalists were also invited to serve as advisors with other industry professionals. People living in different regions of the country offered insights to expand criteria, planning and decision making. This mixture of skills provided different types of expertise and perspectives that (1) contributed to a more diverse selection of grantees and (2) strengthened the diverse ecosystem that supports the creation and touring of ensemble theater.

**CHART 1: ADVISOR ROLE OVERLAP 2010-2022**



“ When I chose my finalists, I'd heard of their work and believed that my insight would help them become an NTP grantee. I'm happy that it did.

—NTP Advisor

The chart on the left shows the past overlapping roles of NTP advisors between 2010-2022. Of the 47 advisors of the National Theater Project, about 38% of advisors (n=17) have received Presenter Travel grants. Five advisors have been finalists for the NTP Creation and Touring grant and four have been awarded NTP Creation and Touring grants. More than half (55%, n= 21) of all NTP advisors surveyed indicated holding more than one role in the NTP ecosystem. The greatest overlap in roles was amongst advisors who were also NTP presenters. See a complete list of NTP advisors in Appendix C.

Advisors were permitted to select the NTP finalists that they supported in the full application process. Data collected showed that some advisors chose to work with finalists whose work they knew nothing about while other advisors chose to support finalists within their same artistic experience. All advisors expected to learn something new while supporting the finalists.

## Advisor Training for Racial Equity in the Panel Process

Prior to 2018, advisors became familiar with their role through an orientation process that reviewed the goals of the program, the advisor expectations, and the program timeline. In 2018, NEFA worked with a cohort of 12 grantmakers from the United States and Canada to examine and identify ways to strengthen equity in grant decision making practices and published “[RE-Tool: Racial Equity in the Panel Process](#).” This project complemented much of the work NTP was already doing in this realm. Over the past two years, NEFA has implemented several best practices from “RE-Tool.” NTP now holds expanded multi-part orientations for advisors to emphasize EDIA in preparation for the application review meetings, including webinars and in-person orientations to discuss NEFA's values, identify potential individual biases, develop group agreements to guide discussions, review the role of the panelists, and discuss the review criteria to clarify and develop shared vocabulary and understanding. These shifts elicited positive feedback from advisors, who said they gained a deeper understanding of NEFA's EDIA values and the review criteria, and that the practices built better group cohesion and mutual respect.

Interviewees shared that they were trained to score applications based on NTP's stated program criteria and rubrics. They shared that the information is rigorous and mostly clear, based on NEFA's mission, NTP's mission, and how to assess applications using 4 scoring rubrics:

- Strength of project description
- The relationship with the development partner(s)
- Meeting the benchmark for devised work and an ensemble
- How the project addresses artistic and other diversities
- How the project proposes engagement w/communities

They were also trained to assess work samples to determine the extent that they match the applicant's stated project goals, whether applicants can demonstrate their goals, and the likelihood those goals can be achieved. Advisors were instructed to not score applications based on personal biases or value judgements.

Advisors shared that one of the most challenging criteria to assess was diversity of projects reflecting EDIA goals. This was partly a challenge because advisors felt the criteria wasn't specific enough to clearly determine how an applicant met the requirements. This was also a challenging process because it forced many advisors

from a more conservative perspective on aesthetics in theater out of their comfort zone. It challenged advisors to move past their personal biases and possible desire to have their finalist win a grant, and focus more on how the final grantees best represented what NTP was working to accomplish through the program. This was a greater challenge for earlier advisors.

### Applicant Selection Criteria

During NTP's pilot, there were a few ensembles that developed their work for 2-3 years before touring. As the selection criteria evolved, the focus shifted to primarily prioritizing tour ready productions so that the touring and collaboration with presenters and producing theaters could be more central to the grant experience. Ensembles were expected to present strategies for completing creation and initiating touring within 18 months of the grant award.

With each NTP grant cycle, NTP staff and advisors discussed how the criteria could (1) attract applicants that understood and proposed work that integrated the varied tenets of devised theater, (2) increase the diversity of stories told, and methods used and (3) support the advisors with adequately and equitably reviewing the grant applications. Table 5 below documents significant shifts to the NTP applicant criteria.

**TABLE 5: NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT CREATION & TOURING APPLICATION SIGNIFICANT CRITERIA CHANGES 2014- 2020**

Year	New Criteria <sup>7</sup>	Intention
2014	Offers the potential to deepen engagement with audiences and communities because of the work's relevance, originality, and/or timeliness, utilizing live and virtual strategies to connect artists and the public.	Heightened the level of engagement with audiences and communities.
2015	Push aesthetic boundaries and reflect the cultural and aesthetic diversity of today's theater	EDIA: To increase the equity, diversity, inclusion, and access to devised theater among artists, presenters, and their audiences.
2019	Support the development and touring of new artist-led devised, ensemble theater works that demonstrate excellence in the artists' practice. NTP uses the following definitions in consideration of grant applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensemble: A group of two or more people committed to working together over time to develop a distinct practice and body of work.</li> <li>▪ Devised: A process of co-creation and joint discovery that prioritizes generative artists, which may include but does not prioritize playwrights, is iterative, and results in original work.</li> </ul>	Definitions of "devised" and "ensemble" were added to provide more clarity to both advisors and applicants.
2020	Support work that contributes to the cultural and aesthetic diversities of today's theater. NEFA values an equitable, diverse, and inclusive world, which we interpret as all people having fair access to the tools and resources they need to realize creative and community endeavors. We acknowledge structural inequities that have excluded individuals and communities from opportunity based on race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, class, age, language, culture, nation of origin, and geography, and strive to counter those inequities in our work.	EDIA: Added additional information into the criteria to better guide advisors and applicants on what it means to contribute to the cultural and aesthetic diversities of today's theater.

## Financial Support

Just as the applicant criteria evolved, so did the financial support made available to those within the NTP ecosystem. Early evaluation findings and direct feedback resulted in a wider range of grants and services that NTP has offered since its pilot years.

Three grants have been fundamental to NTP since the beginning:

- Creation and Touring grants** (est. 2010) are available to artists who meet criteria that directly align with NTP's program goals and can go up to \$130,000. The number of creation and touring grants shifted from 6 grants to 8 grants before 2018. Then from 8 grants to 10 grants in 2020. In 2020, they began asking applicants to define success in their own terms; this tweak greatly shifted the way projects were discussed in the panel process.
- Presentation grants** (est. 2011) are linked to NTP Creation and Touring Grants. They were created to invite United States presenters and other non-profit organizations to present the work of Creation and Touring ensembles, offering up to 50% of the artistic fee (including travel expenses) for NTP projects.
- Presenter Travel grants** originally covered up to 50% with a \$700 limit for the presenter to travel to see the work. In 2018, NTP increased the percentage to 70% and got rid of the limit in response to feedback from NTP stakeholders. Stakeholders shared that an increased subsidy would encourage presenters to take advantage of the fund more often. In 2020, Travel grants also opened up to Creation and Touring grant recipients to promote their NTP funded project.

As the years progressed, NTP staff identified additional grants that would support NTP goals and the emerging needs of program participants, starting with three capacity building grants.



Rebecca Mwase and Ron Ragin,  
Photo Credit: Kyle & Linette Kielinski



Young Jean Lee, Photo Credit: A.J. Zanyk

- Tour Planning and Administration grants** were offered starting in 2012 to ensembles and artist collaborations that do not have capacity to manage both the artistic and administrative roles necessary to develop potential touring sites for the new work. This supplemental grant, up to \$10,000, was awarded on a case by case basis. In response to grantee feedback stating the need to increase administrative support, NTP extended this grant to all NTP Creation and Touring projects in FY15.
- Artist Development grants** were added in 2014 to acknowledge the extensive level of work that artists put into developing and submitting a complete Creation and Touring application and also to encourage forward momentum for the applicants to complete their projects. They were originally granted to 4-6 declined applicants. Since 2020, it has been awarded to each of the declined finalists as a formal part of the program. Artist Development grants are between \$5,000 to \$10,000.
- Transition grants** were made available in 2016 to Creation and Touring grantees at the end of their projects, in response to a need for additional support to promote the ongoing sustainability of their projects, operations, and partnerships. These grants are up to \$15,000 with an average range between \$7,000-\$10,000.
- Application Honoraria** were introduced in 2019 for all finalist applicants who do not receive a Creation and Touring Grant or Artist Development Grant as a recognition of the quality of their proposals, and the time and effort spent preparing them. The grant award was \$1,000.

**TABLE 6: TOTAL NUMBER OF NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT AWARDS AND AMOUNTS, AS OF OCTOBER 2022<sup>8</sup>**

Type of Grant	Number of Grants Awarded	Total Grant Amount Awarded
NTP Artist Development Grants	75	\$710,500
NTP Creation and Touring Grants	96	\$10,662,700
Application Honoraria	86	\$54,500
NTP Presentation Grants <sup>9</sup>	351	\$2,777,945
NTP Presenter Travel Grants	199	\$168,251.75
NTP Transition Grants	34	\$422,000
Total	841	\$12,017,951 <sup>10</sup>

While the Creation and Touring grant and the subsequent grants and program activities listed above are the hallmark of NTP, NTP has also administered a small subset of special grants when there were additional funds available. Such projects were selected due to alignment between project visions and that of NTP. Appendix D provides a brief overview of those projects.



## NTP CREATION AND TOURING APPLICATION PROCESS

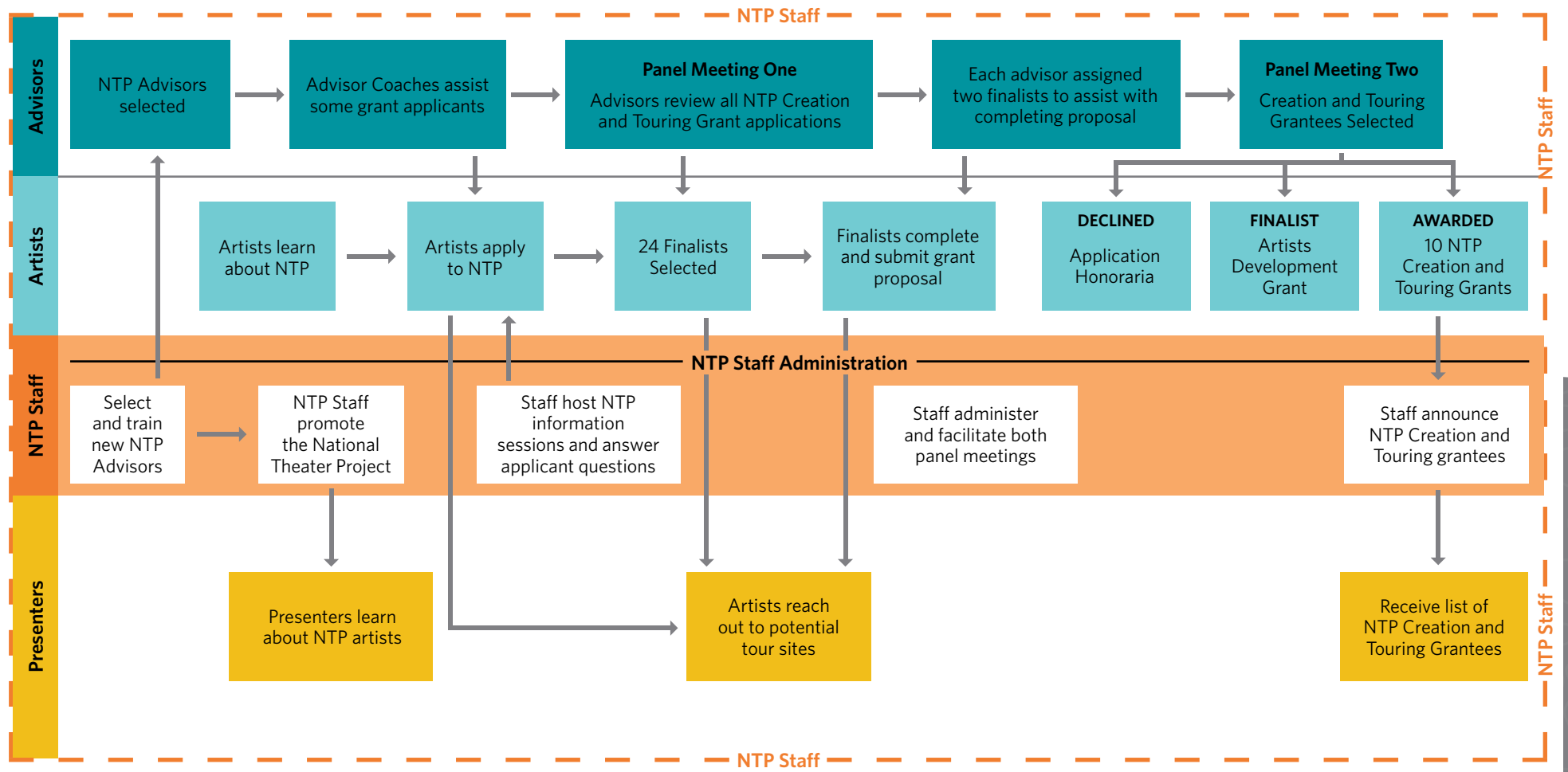
### Applicant Process

NTP's major operational activities revolve around the Creation and Touring application. The following stakeholders are involved in NTP's application process:

- NTP staff
- Artists
- Advisors
- Presenters

Every application component is designed for the success of the artist ensembles. Like all program elements, the application process has evolved over time. The charts and descriptions below illustrate the NTP application process used for the last several years for the creation and touring application process.

FIGURE 5: NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT APPLICATION PROCESS



The Creation and Touring application involves an extensive process with the following key milestones:

1. NEFA staff select and train NTP advisors.
2. NTP staff promote NTP, hold office hours, and host information sessions to answer applicant questions.
3. Advisor Coaches assist some applicants with their preliminary application.
4. Artists submit preliminary applications.
5. Panel of 12 Advisors reviews and selects 24 finalists.
6. Advisors are assigned 2 artists/ensembles to consult in completing their full grant proposal.
7. Finalists complete and submit grant proposal.
8. Advisors review 24 final submissions to select 10 Creation & Touring Grantees.
9. Declined finalists receive an Artist Development Grant and are encouraged to re-apply.

### Applicant Experience

When artists, advisors and presenters were asked to describe NTP’s application process, they used the words described in Figure 6. The bigger the word, the more frequently it was used. It’s important to note that these words were cited in spite of the NTP stakeholder role.

**FIGURE 6: NTP APPLICATION PROCESS STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS**



*“I’ve never been asked for this much nor cared this much about an application process. I mean even if I was just a finalist I received technical and financial support for my work. I didn’t lose by not getting the award....honestly the demands and needs for clarity in the application helped me clarify my thoughts and my why and ultimately get another grant. I eventually came back to NTP with a more well formed application and became a NTP grantee. They took a chance on me. I’m better for it.” — Artist*



Past applicants and program staff shared in interviews that the primary challenge faced by applicants since the start is the complexity of the application. It requires great detail and time to fully describe the devised ensemble group, project, tour components, community engagement, management, and partnerships that will support the completion of the project’s development and tour. Interviewees shared that it is common for ensembles to apply for a NTP grant multiple times before successfully receiving a Creation and Touring grant. Interviewees also shared that the Creation and Touring grants tend to favor the larger ensembles because they have the resources needed to compile a competitive application. Recognizing the time required to complete the application, NTP worked to increase support along the way for applicants. NTP relied heavily on advisors to guide artists that became finalists through the application process. NTP staff were also important resources for artists. In the spring of 2021, NTP introduced Advisor Coaching to help some applicants prepare their preliminary application. This is targeted to a subset of Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) applicants to help them be more successful in the application process. Eleven coaching meetings occurred in Spring 2021 and of those who participated, two received the Creation and Touring grant.

*“I didn’t get the award. My first application just wasn’t where it needed to be. I didn’t have the time or know how to give it the attention it needed. It’s not like I had the resources to hire a grant writer either. I was pissed about it. It was a heavy lift but I’d be lying if I said there wasn’t a reward—the process made me think and get clearer about what I was proposing to do. Luckily one of the advisors helped me get a better understanding of what was missing too.” — Artist*

Each artist that applies to NTP receives a transcript of the panel discussion about their application. The insights offered in the transcripts are meant to assist the artist with understanding how their project aligned with NTP selection criteria. NTP staff also make themselves available to discuss the technical aspects of their applications that need further development.



NTP Advisors discuss creation and touring applicants, Photo Credit: NEFA Team

## Finalist Experience

Those artist applicants that are moved to the finalist phase are paired with advisors that help the finalists enhance their application and make them more competitive for the final application phase. Application finalists were asked in a survey to describe the type of support they received during the application process. See the responses below in Table 7.

**TABLE 7: TYPE OF APPLICATION GUIDANCE RECEIVED FROM ADVISORS<sup>11</sup>**

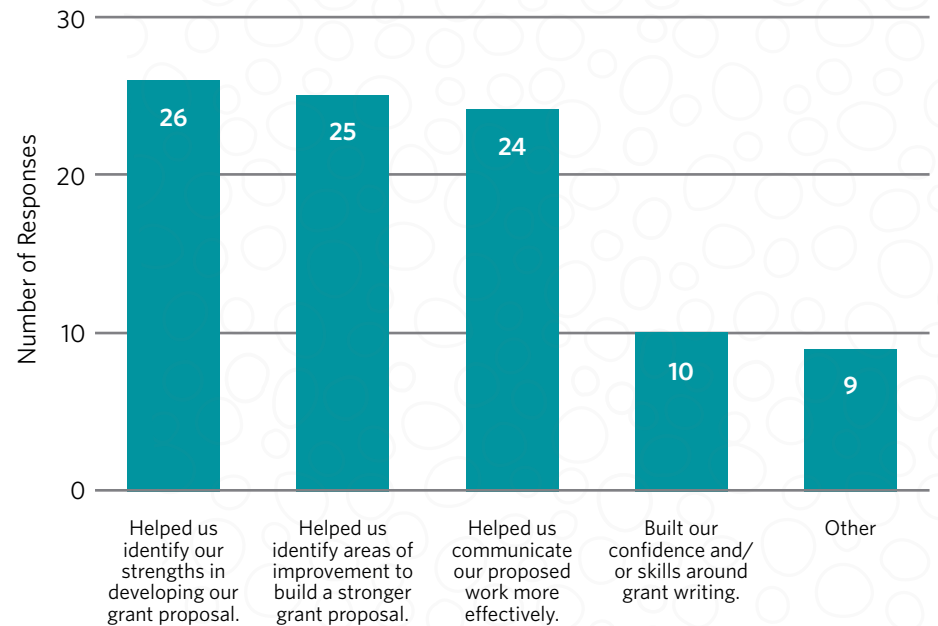
Type of Guidance Received	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Feedback on grant proposal narratives	32	89%
Feedback on full proposal drafts	24	67%
Feedback on proposal work samples	23	64%
Feedback on proposal budgets	16	44%
How to develop relationships with presenters	9	25%
How to develop relationships with artistic development partners	7	19%
Other	3	8%
Wellness (i.e., self care, health etc.)	2	6%

Aside from Cohort Meetings (see below), interviewed advisors shared three ways that they personally chose to continue to engage grant applicants after the application process. Some stayed in touch as their presenter and had regular check-ins leading up to the show. Many stayed in touch as a resource, remaining available if artists had questions. They also sent information to artists to help with other grants, budgeting, or artistic development. Others would advocate for artists that didn't get funding, helping them meet and get picked up by other presenters. Where respondents cited "other" in the survey, responses included recommendations to inspire creativity and names of artists that could offer additional support and guidance.

*"I took my role as an advisor seriously. This work is so distinct and niched that it takes a community that believes in it to help it get off the ground. I think I went above what was asked of me but I did it because I believed." — Advisor*

Chart 3 to the right shows how instrumental the advisors were to finalists as they prepared their final application for review. Interviewed and surveyed finalists understood that advisors would help them strengthen their applications. Artists that applied to NTP more than once collectively believed that advisors could serve as champions for projects when they understood the proposed work. Conversely, if they did not understand the proposed work they could not be the best advocate in the final panel discussion. Applicants met with their advisors over coffee, by email,

**CHART 2: BENEFITS OF ADVISOR SUPPORT FOR FINALISTS<sup>12</sup>**



or via zoom. Some went an extra step to attend project rehearsals to give feedback. However, this wasn't always possible if the advisor lived in another state from the applicant. Impressions of finalists' interactions with advisors were mostly positive. Applicants shared that advisors gave helpful feedback like a coach and that advisors were primarily supportive of grant projects. One of the biggest concerns about finalists' experience with advisors is the variability in advisor quality, support, and availability. Applicants who were finalists more than once observed this first hand and had mixed reviews of their experience with different advisors. They observed a variance in availability, interest in the project, ability to translate the project to the panel of advisors, ability to technically guide the applicant in their application, frequency of interaction, and depth in reading of applications and giving feedback.

*"If your advisor didn't understand your work, you can forget it. I learned the hard way how detrimental that could be. Luckily after going through the application process again, I made sure that my advisor understood all elements of my work. — Artist*

Finalists believed that to stand out in the final NTP panel discussion the applicant had to:



Have established longevity in devised/ensemble theater



Clearly describe how the project would engage communities



Introduce a unique project topic

## Advisor Experience

On average, interviewed advisors reported that they spent approximately 50 hours per year on their advisor duties including preparing for the first and second panel, preparing feedback for artists, corresponding with artists, and when applicable, watching rehearsals in person. Interview respondents were evenly split in their perception of whether the advisor honorarium was sufficient for their time. Those who were advisors earlier in the program's operation did not believe the pay was sufficient. Those who participated as advisors in more recent years felt adequately compensated. NTP increased the honorarium over time to be responsive to advisor input. Advisors most often saw their participation as a service, regardless of whether they felt the pay was sufficient or not. While each advisor spent their time differently, all advisors interviewed expressed an interest in the applicant's success.

By and large, advisors treasured their time in this role and what they gained from it. Advisors over the years became deeply invested in the projects they supported.

*"Being an advisor stretched me...I didn't just work with theater companies that were familiar to me...we were able to pick projects we saw something in and I learned a lot...I knew NTP's role and I had to be able to convey that and how this artist fit in. This experience connected me with new artists that I enjoyed exchanging with...it enabled me to take my process and extend it in a couple of new areas...working with the NTP criteria helped me look at the projects in very specific ways that were not connected to my personal preference (artistic style)...I worked with a theatrical process that was opera but I didn't know opera...it required me to listen and try to translate those things into something I understood and could be understood by anyone...that became a part of my skill set... we were funding artists and presenters but I was just as lucky because my own work was never the same." — NTP Advisor*

When asked about the challenges with the role, advisors shared that they struggled trying to find the best ways to give constructive feedback and learning how to advocate for work they didn't completely understand. Additionally, the advisors weren't as clear about the expected time commitment. Even when there are challenges, grantees and advisors have found great success through the process.

## NTP CREATION AND TOURING SUPPORT

Since its first year, the Creation and Touring grant has been a coveted award for artists to secure. Artists and presenters alike shared that receiving the NTP award meant your work was validated and vetted by an esteemed group of theater professionals.

*"I am more likely to explore an artist's work if it's backed by NTP. If it's coming through NTP I know how thorough it will be. I know they took the time and did their due diligence."*  
— Presenter

*"Once I became a NTP grantee I knew I was one step further on my journey. I knew that folks that maybe wouldn't give me a second look in the past now saw me. NTP seeing me was my first step."* — Artist

For NTP, the application process is significant and services a direct need. At any given point in the year, the NTP staff are balancing two grant cycles: (1) a two-phase application process; (2) a grantee process with convenings and meetings etc. and (3) supporting those that haven't finished their grant cycle. Grant cycle delays typically occurred because of internal project issues, COVID related delays, varied tour engagement timelines, and the presenter's seasons.

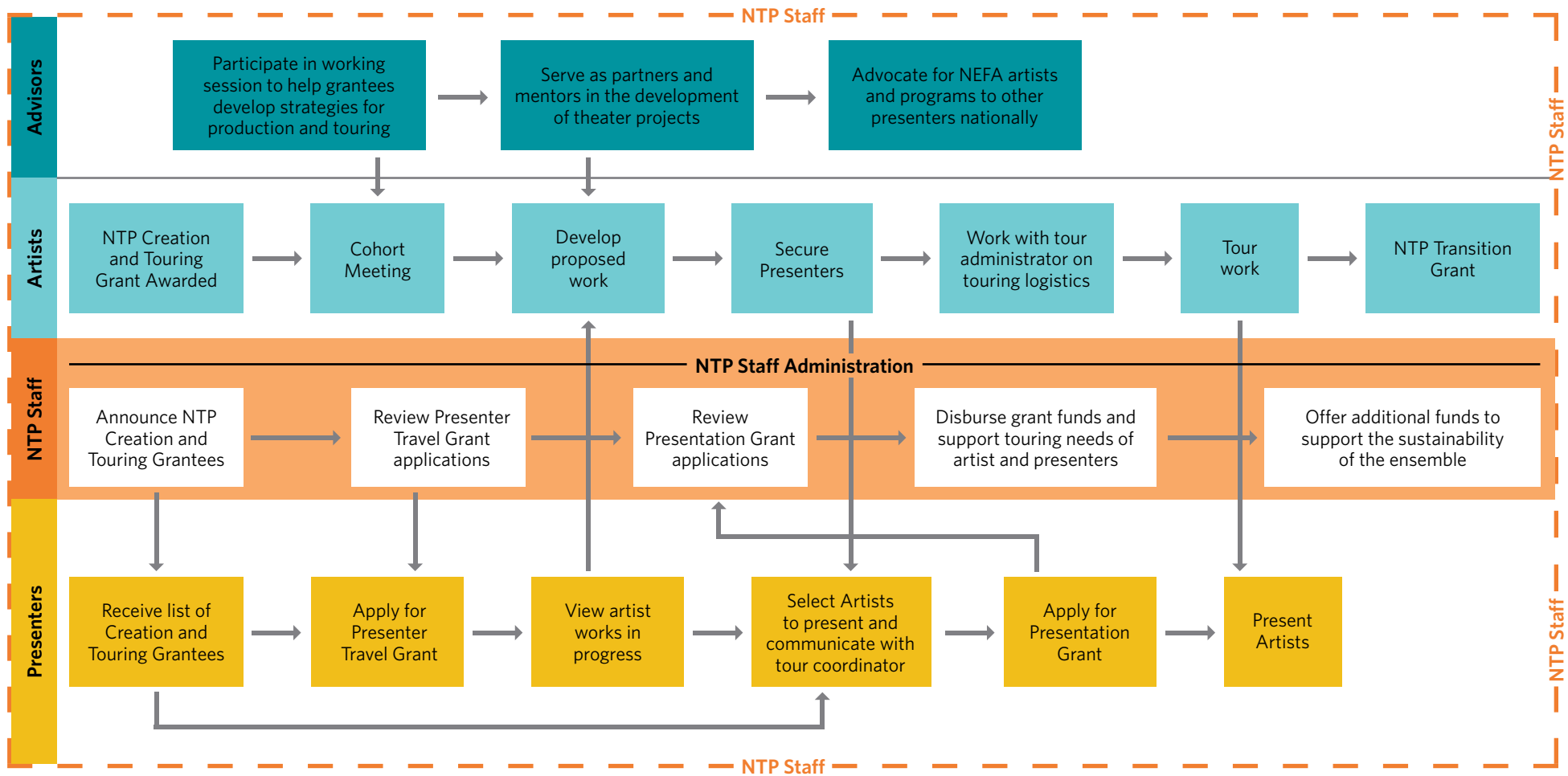


VisionIntoArt, Photo Credit: Jill Steinberg

**“ There was an advisor who was unsure about a finalist they were assigned. By the end of the process, the finalist flipped the advisor's perception, won an award, went on tour, and later joined the artist's company.**

—NEFA Staff Member

**FIGURE 7: GRANTEE EXPERIENCE**



Key grant activities revolve around NTP staff and advisors providing direct guidance and mentoring to Creation and Touring grantees regarding the development, planning, and touring activities for their project, followed by additional support to close out the grant.

1. Regional convenings are held to strengthen NTP's presence in underrepresented regions, encourage artists from underrepresented historically excluded groups to apply for the Creation and Touring grant, educate advisors on the diversity of aesthetic among devised, ensemble theater from other cultures and regions and the challenges they face to create and tour their work.

2. Grantees, advisors, and NTP staff attend cohort convenings to support project development and tour planning.
3. Grantees develop proposed work, secure additional presenters, and finalize logistics.
4. Tour the work.
5. Transition grants are available to grantees to support the continuity and sustainability of ensembles.

## Grantee Characteristics

NTP has curated a diverse group of artist ensembles to create and tour their projects. Grantees interviewed noted that their work:



Incorporated a range of artistic mediums including storytelling, contemporary and classical music, movement and dance, musical theater/opera, multimedia, puppetry, circus, poetry/spoken word, and comedy



Covered issues of culture, social justice, health, environmental justice, and politics



Told stories to give voice to communities who often feel silenced



Represented indigenous people, immigrants, descendants of enslaved people, LGBTQIA, disabled, and other historically excluded groups



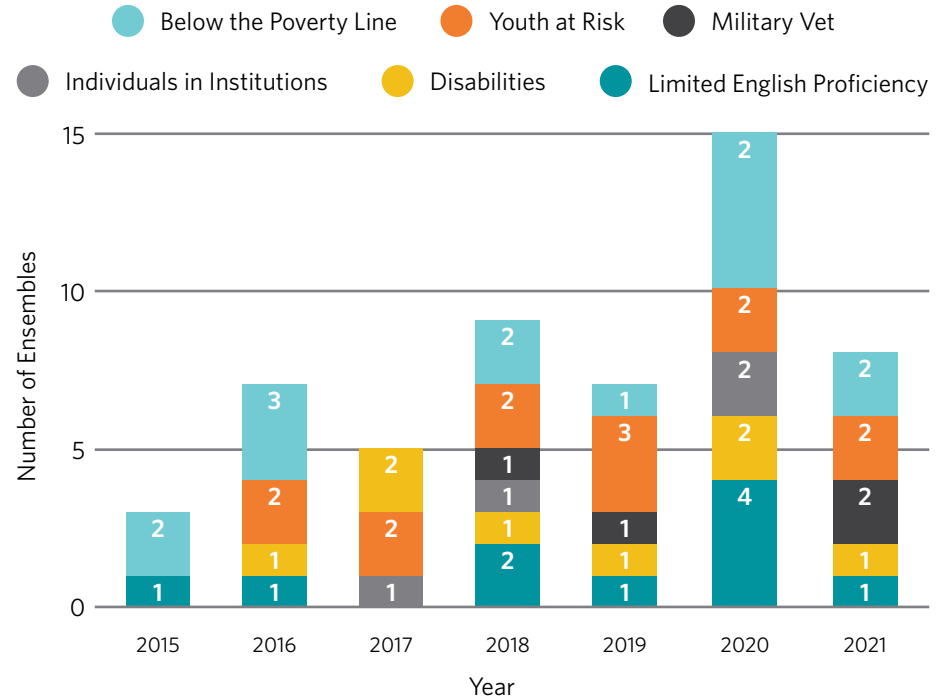
Bridged multiple art forms while engaging communities with performances, conversations, workshops, shared meals, celebrations, and other modes of engagement



Was performed in theaters, in parks, at festivals, under bridges, at markets, often creating and performing in spaces most relevant to their audience and the message of their project

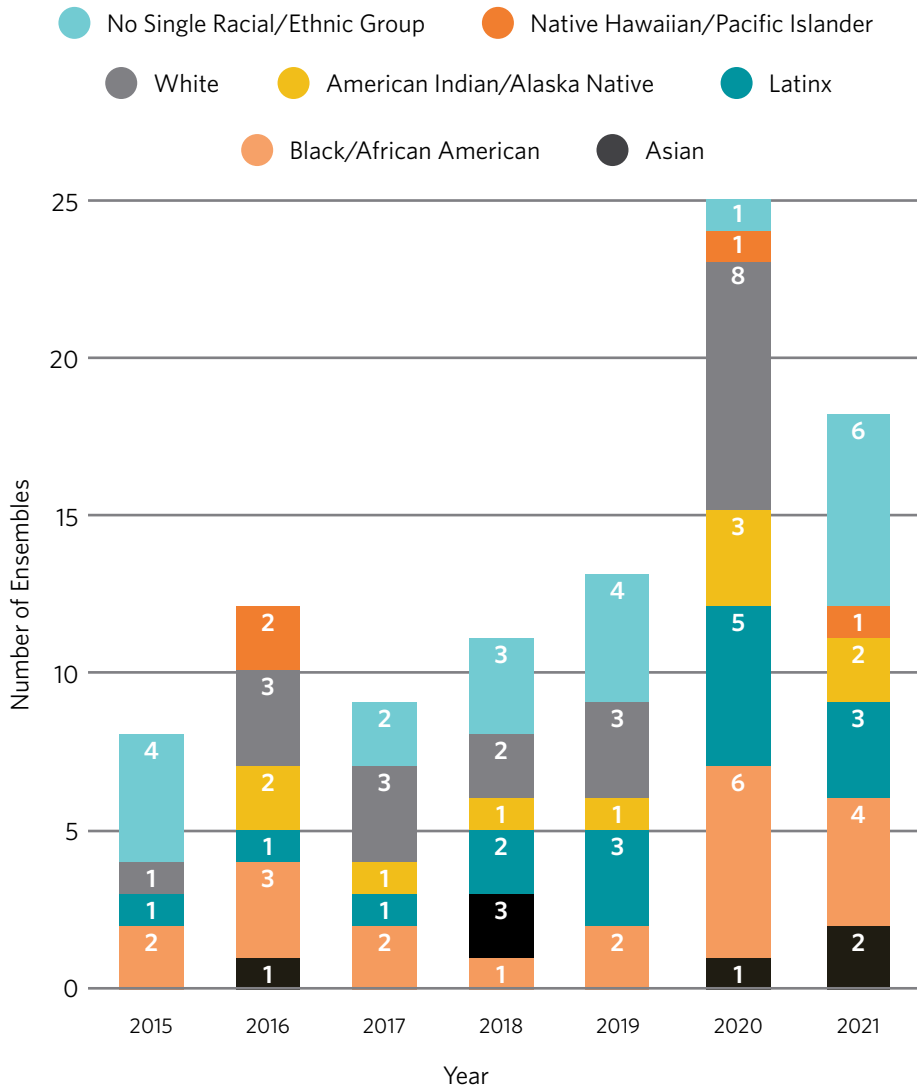
When they applied for their Creation and Touring grants, their projects were at mid development stages. Many successfully brought their shows to tour because of the support and guidance received from presenters and advisors.

**CHART 3: CREATION AND TOURING GRANTEES INTENDED COMMUNITIES, BETWEEN 2015-2021<sup>13</sup>**



Creation and Touring grantees were asked to indicate the communities that their work prioritized. See the descriptions above in Chart 3. As the advisors and racial/ethnic makeup of Creation and Touring grantees evolved so did the topics addressed in the artistic work.

**CHART 4: RACIAL/ETHNIC MAKEUP OF CREATION AND TOURING GRANTEEES BETWEEN 2015 - 2021<sup>14</sup>**



Based on available data, Chart 4 above highlights the number of racial/ethnic groups represented in the grantee pool between 2015-2021. The chart illustrates how the racial/ethnic makeup of Creation and Touring ensemble members evolved over the years which highlights that NTP's EDIA efforts were making an impact.

**Additional Program Support**

In addition to the funding noted above, NTP creates multiple ways to ensure that its grantees have the support they need to develop and tour their projects. The two primary offerings are noted below.

**COHORT MEETINGS**

Since 2010 the cohort meetings have been a unique opportunity for grantees awarded within the same year to share information about their funded projects, receive support from NTP advisors, and build relationships with members of the NTP ecosystem. Since cohort advisors are both presenters and artists, the support offered covers a range of topics and expands the networks of all attendees. During the earlier cohort meetings, one artist from the grantee ensemble was invited to attend and participate in these meetings. The structure of the cohort meetings have been fairly consistent over the years. However, almost immediately after the first cohort meeting grantees successfully advocated for increasing the number of participants from an ensemble that could attend the cohort meetings. This allowed for shared and enhanced learning and contributions from ensembles. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, cohort meetings were held online in 2020, 2021, 2022.



2018 NTP Grantee Cohort Meeting in Minneapolis, MN, Photo Credit: Pangea World Theater staff member

Table 8 below shows the topics that surveyed grantees said they received guidance on during the cohort meetings.

*"I loved supporting the grantees at the convenings. You get to zero in on the projects that you loved and the ones that you want to know more about. We connect [them] to others in the field -we take stock of how we can help each other...we get clear about timelines. We were trading resources. It was much more about relationships than money. I was there to help but I received more than I expected." — NTP Advisor and Presenter*

**TABLE 8: TYPE OF GUIDANCE GRANTEEES RECEIVED AT COHORT MEETINGS<sup>15</sup>**

Type of Guidance Received	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Feedback on the project's development	24	55%
Tour planning	15	34%
Other	15	34%
Guidance on how to leverage their relationships with presenters	11	25%
Financial planning	7	16%
Wellness (i.e., self care, health etc.)	7	16%
Guidance on how to leverage their relationships with development partners	5	11%

As noted above, the majority of the surveyed grantees (55%) reported receiving feedback on their project's development during the cohort meeting. Tour planning support and "other" tied as the next highest rated guidance shared. Those who selected "other" reported receiving guidance with how to make connections with other artists, general support and encouragement about their work, or support with marketing.



2014 Cohort Meeting; Lisa Steindler, Thaddeus Phillips, Jeremy Wilhelm, Diane Rodriguez, Photo Credit: NTP Team

## REGIONAL CONVENINGS

Regional convenings were another deeply meaningful tool designed for information sharing and learning to occur for NTP stakeholders. Archived data showed that during an annual advisory meeting to select NTP awardees in 2014, NTP advisors identified the need to better understand how to work with artists and presenters from less well-resourced areas. They observed a gap in knowledge and experience with certain geographic regions and aesthetics, putting artists from these regions at a disadvantage during the grant decision-making process. In 2015, the first regional convening was held as an intimate conversation among artists, presenters, producers, service organizations, and funders representing the southeastern artist ecosystem and beyond. It was an opportunity for artists to share stories and analysis of the regional infrastructure, triumphs and challenges in supporting new and existing work in the performing arts and the structures that support emerging and veteran artists, from commissioning to touring.

Interviewees added that the convening provided opportunities for NTP advisors to meet artists and presenters previously unknown to them "in their own home" and to make connections that will allow them to understand the challenges faced by artists and presenters who are not in heavily resourced, primarily urban areas. Regional convenings were held annually up until the Covid-19 pandemic began.

Prior to the pandemic, NEFA held its regional convenings the day prior to the cohort meeting. Regional convenings were put on hold since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and resumed in 2022 with one day in person and two days online and spread out to reduce Zoom fatigue. Table 9 below lists the locations and dates of each round of meetings.

**TABLE 9: NTP REGIONAL CONVENINGS & COHORT MEETINGS**

Year	Location	Region	Regional Convening	Cohort Meeting	Grantees
2013	Boston, MA	New England	NA	Feb 20-21	2012 Cohort
2014	San Francisco, CA	West Coast	NA	Feb 16-17	2013 Cohort
2015	Jackson, MS	Southeast	Feb 15	Feb 16-17	2014 Cohort
2016	Phoenix, AZ	Southwest	Mar 20	Mar 21-22	2015 Cohort
2016	New York, NY	Northeast	NA	Dec 7-8	2016 Cohort
2017	Dallas, TX	Southern	Dec 3	Dec 4-5	2017 Cohort
2018	Minneapolis, MN	Midwest	Dec 2	Dec 3-4	2018 Cohort
2019	Knoxville, TN	Appalachian	Dec 1	Dec 2-3	2019 Cohort
2020	Online	NA	NA	Dec 14-5	2020 Cohort
2021	Online	NA	NA	Feb 24, Dec 14 & 16	2021 Cohort
2022	In Person/Online	New England	Nov 1, 9, 16		2022 Cohort



## CREATION AND TOURING ACTIVITIES

When grantees were asked to reflect on their successes and challenges along the way it became evident that several indicators needed to be present for the funded project to operate smoothly. When two or more of these factors were not addressed, the grantees described the experience as challenging. See Table 10 and 11 below for an overview of those insights. NTP stakeholders would benefit from hearing these details in table 10 and 11 during their orientation so that everyone understands the significance of these factors.

**TABLE 10: FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO SUCCESSFUL CREATION AND TOURING GRANTEE EXPERIENCES**

- ✓ Clear understanding about the total costs to tour the production
- ✓ Additional fundraising support to complement the NTP funding and cover total production costs
- ✓ Skilled staff to manage the tour logistics
- ✓ Sufficient understanding by the presenter about the cultural significance and prioritized community engagement efforts for the funded work
- ✓ Nuanced marketing of the funded work by presenters
- ✓ Planned accommodations for artists traveling with families to different tour sites
- ✓ Flexibility and adaptability among artists and presenters to respond to project changes and delays

*“For [our project], it was a team of artists and staff traveling to 10-12 engagement residencies and rehearsals and performances for 6-8 weeks. The NTP grant shifts the dynamic in a healthy way in that artists are coming to the table with money. So we have a higher footing in terms of negotiations. We received a \$50-60K development grant. The total commissions from [the University] was \$300K over a 2 year time period. It was expensive to produce and create. The investment helped us bring on additional support and commissioning dollars.” — NTP Creation and Touring Artist*

*“The main challenge with this company is a lack of enough support staff traveling with the company to make certain other elements of the production planning and logistics can be carried out well. For the technical elements, there was only one person who traveled with the company who was expected to manage the entire production process. Typically touring companies will have two to four support staff to help with production elements. Fortunately, we were able to add more local staff to cover areas we typically find are covered by touring companies.” — NTP Presenter*

When presenters were asked to describe what made them choose to present a NTP funded production, they shared the following:

**TABLE 11: FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO PRESENTERS CHOOSING TO PARTNER WITH NTP FUNDED PROJECTS**

- ✓ Alignment and commitment to the artistic and cultural values of the project and ensemble
- ✓ Desire to bring the topic addressed in the work to their community
- ✓ Time to effectively support the production planning and logistics required
- ✓ Potential for the work to grow and tour in the field
- ✓ Ability for funded projects to leverage other resources — beyond NTP — to support the tour

*“[Our presenting organization] is rooted in ensemble work. We remain committed to this programming, despite the challenges that sometimes accompany it. It’s always challenging to further develop projects while also presenting, because large-scale ensemble theater programming is almost always in progress.” — NTP Presenter*

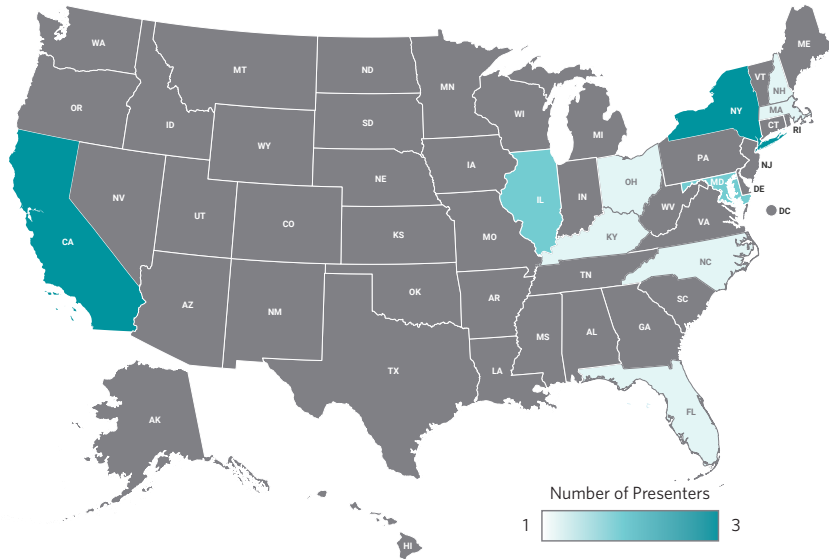


*Complex Movements with NTP staff, Photo Credit: The Theater Offensive staff*

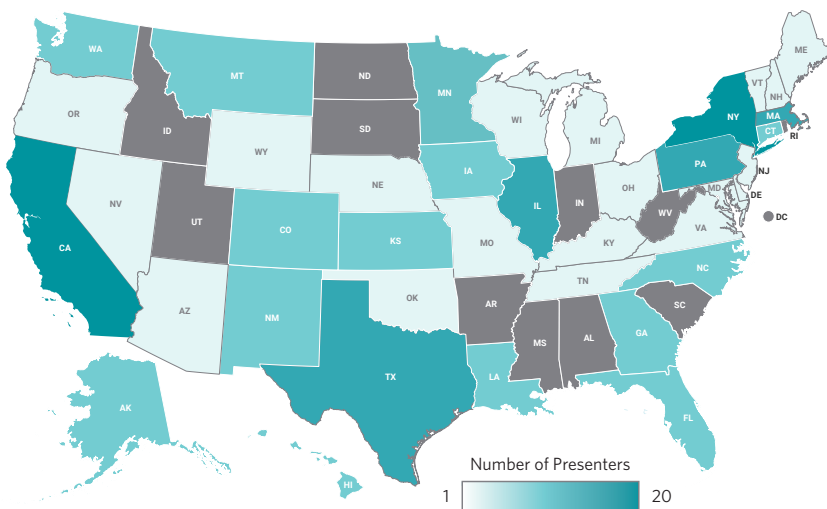
## Touring Locations

Since its inception, NTP has been committed to creating a space for devised and ensemble theater work to tour throughout the United States. The following maps illustrate the states where NTP funded projects toured over the last 10 years. Tour sites during NTP's early years were happening either on the west or east coasts. Between 2013- 2017, NTP saw a significant expansion of NTP touring sites. By 2022, NTP projects had toured most of the United States.

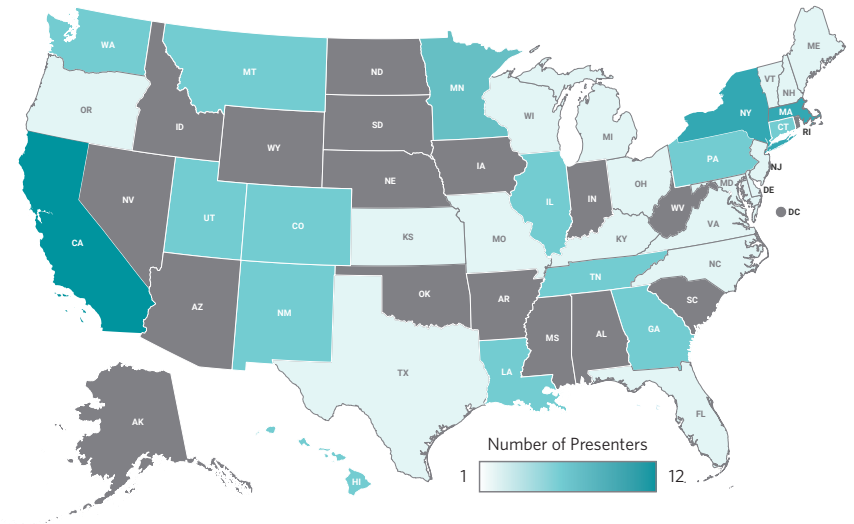
### NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT PILOT TOUR SITES 2010-2012



### NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT TOUR SITES 2013-2017

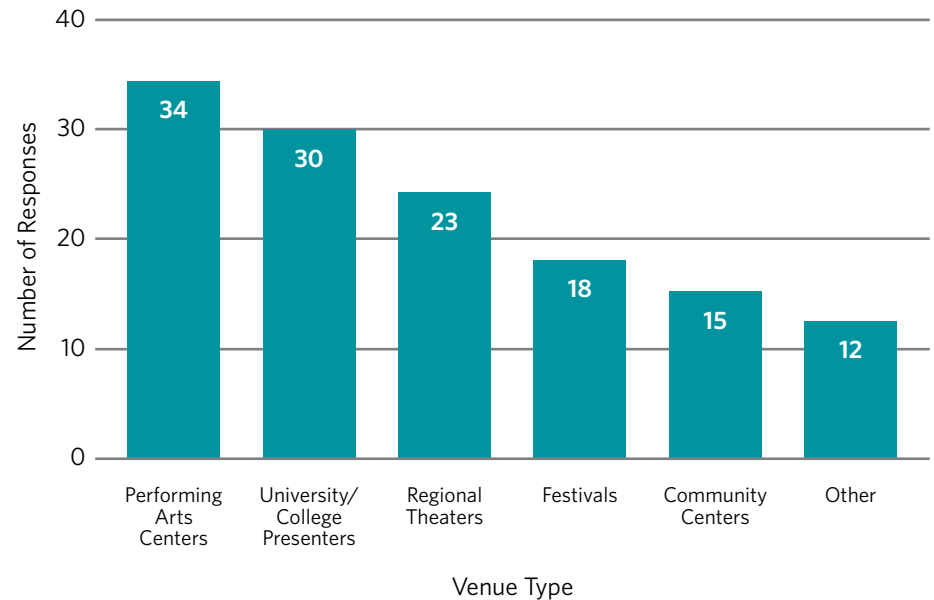


### NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT TOUR SITES 2018-2022



The venue types that presented NTP work were just as varied. Below in Chart 5, listed are the types of venues reported in the survey. The majority of NTP presenters were performing arts centers and universities /colleges. Those reflected in the "Other" category include military bases, rural arts collections and community spaces.

### CHART 5: CREATION AND TOURING GRANT PRESENTER VENUES<sup>16</sup>



## Presenter Experience

When NTP presenters were asked to describe their experience in NTP, they used the words seen in Figure 8. The bigger the word, the more frequently it was used. Sixty-five percent (n=34) of presenters noted that the Presenter Travel grant made it financially possible for them to see NTP projects in person as a potential presenter. About 70% (n=36) of respondents felt they received the support they needed from NEFA staff. Six respondents (11%) did not feel that the Presenter Travel grant for seeing the work was sufficient for presenting NTP funded work. Sixty-nine percent (n=36) received the support they needed from NEFA staff to successfully present NTP grantee work.

*“Working with [the Creation and Touring grantee] and her company was a dream. The musicians were generous and a pleasure to work with. [The grantee] was unfailingly accessible, particularly to the school children and their teachers, and to the intimate group of students who attended her talk-back session. It was her management that alerted us to the possibility of accessing this NEFA funding, and we are extremely grateful to them for informing us.” — NTP Presenter*

**FIGURE 8: NTP PRESENTER PERCEPTIONS**

catalytic strategic integral critical  
helpful generous validating infrastructure equity  
marketplace **SUPPORTIVE** indigenous nurturing  
vital radical critical **INNOVATIVE** connector  
inclusive risk taking caring false awareness

## PROGRAM IMPACT

NTP purposefully centers the artist/artist ensemble at the heart of its program design. All planning efforts are delivered to ensure that the work is toured in partnership with presenters across the country. The uniqueness of this intention was felt by all stakeholders. This approach placed the artist voice at the center unlike other grant programs. NTP is also intentional about ensuring that all NTP stakeholders are positively impacted by their participation in the program. NTP staff knew that the funding was always meant to be just one component of the program experience.

The intention and thoughtfulness employed to create cross-sector collaborations and mutually beneficial experiences is evident and one that should be built upon and regularly shared with the theater community. Due to everyone’s hard work and success with touring NTP productions, NTP has built a legacy that benefits its stakeholders and continues to strengthen Creation and Touring grantee’s ability to garner additional funding and other touring opportunities. NTP has seeded lasting opportunities for many of its grantees.

Through unprecedented relationship support, grantees, presenters, and advisors have been able to expand their professional networks and develop lasting professional support and opportunities, elevating their work on stages that would otherwise be out of reach. From the preliminary and final application, to intimate conversations and guidance between artists, advisors, and presenters at convenings, and the committed support of presenters and other producers, NTP has developed a successful blueprint for project development and touring as well as a pipeline for underrepresented theater ensembles to access and transform the theater world that had not yet been introduced to or valued for what they have to offer.



I remember showing our board. NTP leveraged 10’s of thousands of dollars. Our touring fee went up because of NTP. — NTP Artist



I learned about a culture that is relevant to our community and had the resources to embed this performance more deeply in the community, which made it more meaningful to both audiences and artists. — NTP Advisor/Presenter

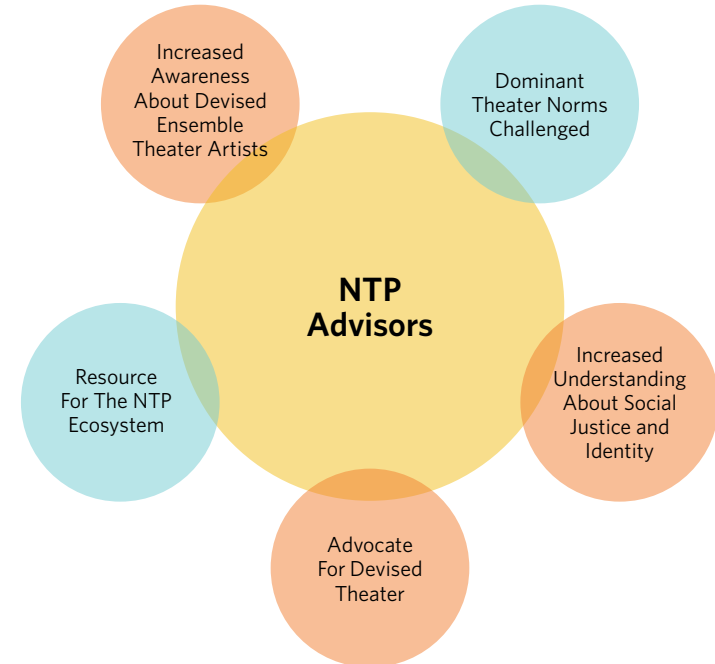
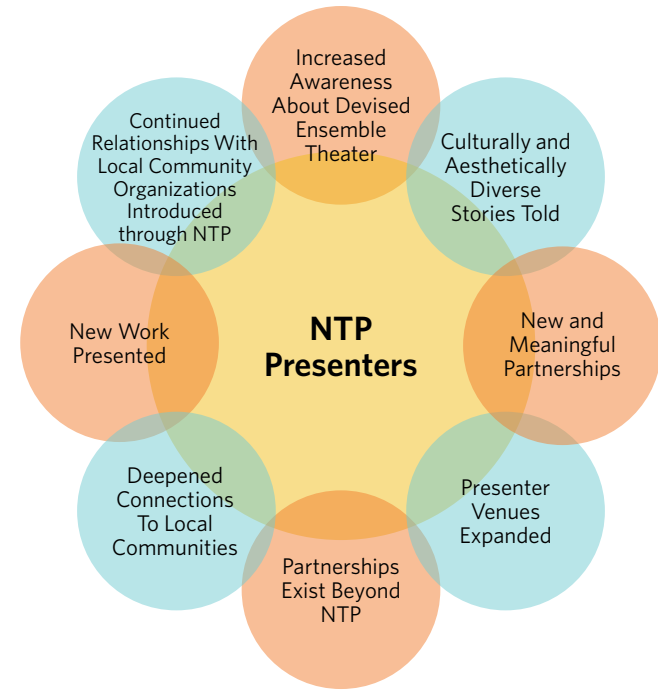
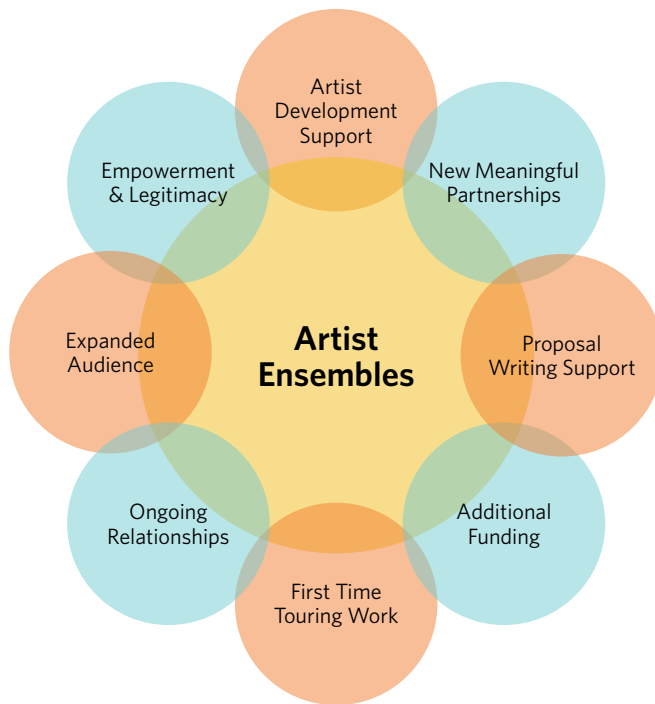


Continue supporting NTP. If NEFA isn’t supporting the work, it doesn’t get made. — NTP Advisor/Presenter

NTP leadership has been able to ensure that EDIA values remain at the forefront of program activities and developments. Through its primary and ancillary grant programs, NTP has created space for other theater groups to access funding and spaces that elevate the work of underrepresented groups in theater. The NTP staff's direction, responsiveness and availability to program participants have carried the success of the program at each step. Their emphasis on shared leadership to determine what's needed for program enhancement resulted in high level learning, deep appreciation, and ongoing commitment to the program among stakeholders.

This study shows that NTP's impact goes far beyond the money. Below, we've illustrated how the NTP stakeholders separately described the program's impact.

**FIGURE 9: NTP IMPACT BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP<sup>17</sup>**



By design, this program has impacted everyone involved. In some cases, NTP funded projects have given artists the confidence to continue to create work. NTP created the space for nourishment and advocacy. NTP exposed new and valuable aesthetics to presenters which expanded thinking, relationships, money and opportunities. NTP required collaboration as a function for success. Siloed efforts could not thrive in this environment. As a result, new voices were parts of the decision making processes that shaped what audiences experienced around the world.

### **Impact of COVID-19 on NTP**

In response to the challenges and expressed needs of grantees during the COVID-19 pandemic, the NTP team sought ways to grant additional funding and supported changes to the tour plan to meet the new demands facing artist ensembles. With the support of the Doris Duke Foundation and the Mellon Foundation, NTP repurposed unspent presenter travel grants and NTP meeting funds due to restrictions related to Covid-19 to provide increased direct support to artists. Starting in 2020, NTP awarded \$10,000 Artist Development Grants to all finalists who did not receive a Creation and Touring grant. They also shifted their panel and cohort meetings online and offered as much flexibility as grantees, presenters, and advisors needed. Additionally, in 2020 (and only 2020) NTP also issued \$500 to every applicant who did not make it to the final round.

## **CONCLUSION AND STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS**

MCE applauds NEFA for recognizing the role that devised theater plays in amplifying the voices and experiences of those in communities. The NTP staff worked tirelessly to support devised and ensemble theater. NTP's program design proves that collaborative planning and support creates benefits for everyone involved and develops a sense of social cohesion. This evaluation demonstrated that the benefits offered by this program go far beyond financial capital.

NTP has appropriately designed the pace for this program's evolution but continues to be challenged with documenting its impact and securing funding to address its evolved reach. MCE believes that this program will continue to deepen its reach, expand learning and create opportunity for all stakeholders. The growth opportunities that emerged during the evaluation — if implemented — will likely enable NTP and ultimately NEFA to be even more effective and efficient in meeting its program goals. It is our hope that the strategic considerations provided below support NTP's efforts to support sustainable growth and a strong vision for the future of the program.

Where appropriate, MCE's strategic considerations include suggestions for implementation to support planning, prioritizing and monitoring success.

## STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION #1

**Streamline and expand NTP's recordkeeping practices so that it's aligned with NTP's mission.**

The NTP team currently maintains a wealth of data on the program. Most of the data reviewed during this study included grant amounts, panel administration and processes, funder reports, grantee locations and presenting partners. These data created opportunities to show trends in the amount of money awarded, the type of presenters engaged, the type of artists awarded. Consider that there could be additional data points to track that include but are not limited to overlapping stakeholder roles (i.e., presenters that have been advisors or artists that have been advisors), completed tour information, wins and opportunities on program experiences, clear distinctions between program finalists and those declined to participate in the program.

NTP's recordkeeping platforms have changed during the course of this ten year program. These changes meant that new data points were integrated and collected over time. Consider if there is a way to ensure that all of the same program data points exist for each NTP cohort so that more comprehensive stories can be shared about the program's reach. During this study, there were many data points documented that relied heavily on staff memory or external files to close the gaps. Consider creating a data strategy and management plan that prioritizes data quality against the program goals in a centralized tool.

## STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION #2

**Send a formal notice directly to presenters about NTP Finalists and Creation and Touring Grantees.**

Findings showed that most presenters received NEFA's formal emailed notice about the NTP finalists from NEFA's communications team. At the same time, NTP team members would informally share finalists' names via email with presenters where a relationship existed. Multiple presenters in this study requested a formal announcement targeted specifically to them about NTP finalists and awardees. They trust NTP's vetting process and are more inclined to consider presenting an artist's work - when they have targeted details available for them to consider.

Here are a few suggestions to consider:

- Host a webinar with presenters and send the recording afterwards
- Draft a detailed memo for presenters to review about NTP finalists and grantees

## STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION #3

**Host a resource bank and/or alumni network for NTP Stakeholders.**

NTP Stakeholders expressed a desire to stay engaged about activities happening within the NTP ecosystem to allow for updates about additional NTP grants, share updates about additional external support, share news about advisor or advisor coaching opportunities, and to share what's happening with the funded work and ensembles. Host a space (could be virtual) that encourages those connections.

Here are some suggestions to consider:

- Launch a Google or Dropbox folder that maintains related program project details, touring and funding opportunities, project features, needs, a list of past grantees and past presenters
- Create an NTP listserv for sharing info
- Create a section on your website for alumni where they can post/upload opportunities outside of NTP that they want to share with other alumni

## STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION #4

### **Diversify and expand fundraising sources to align with the program's evolution and needs.**

NTP currently receives its primary support from two institutional funders (i.e., Mellon and Duke). This generous support has accounted for NTP's primary activities (i.e., grant funding, staffing, cohort meetings, regional convenings) over the years. The funding, however, has been historically flat and has not accounted for inflation which makes it difficult to effectively address NTP's evolving needs. NTP then finds itself at a crossroads where the program's evolution is happening faster than NTP's existing staffing and financial capacity. Additional funds are needed to address NTP's evolving needs. NTP could benefit from working with NEFA's development staff to expand the funders that support NTP. Given these evaluation findings, there's value in exploring NTP alignment with some of the social justice focused funders (e.g., Borealis Philanthropy, Kresge Foundation).

Consider the following suggestions:

- Identify a funder for the leadership development component built into the NTP's design.
- Identify funder(s) that prioritize the NTP related community engagement efforts. Position it as a community engagement achieved through theater/arts. Include former NTP grantees on this journey.
- Assist NTP artists with leveraging other work, reflect on where/how money can be galvanized differently.
- Identify additional resources to cover staff time to support the program's expansion.

## STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION #5

### **Extend the length of advisor and coaching orientation.**

Strengthen the pool of advisors so that there is less variation in grantee experience. Extend the application process timeline to increase the chance that advisors will be available to effectively work with applicants to complete their final application. Offer clearer direction on how important EDIA is and the need to understand cultural context while reviewing applications. Ensure that NTP advisors offer guidance to artists on how to budget and manage grant funds. Assist advisors with creating realistic expectations around the additional fundraising that would be needed to support work.

## STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION #6

### **Create a formalized NTP Creation and Touring Grantee / Presenter guide to clarify role expectations and improve the working relationship between the artist ensemble and presenter.**

Provide coaching and safeguards to ensure artists and presenters have smooth working relationships. Review clear expectations for NTP presenters including topics like nuanced marketing, community engagement for NTP funded work, financial costs to participate in NTP, travel expectations and support. Review EDIA priorities for the program.

## STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION #7

### **Expand the grant monitoring and reporting measures to include holistic performance indicators that will assist with documenting the financial, social and intellectual capital built into the program's goals.**

By and large, NEFA leadership and funders express support and appreciation for this program's vision. They remain encouraged by the efforts and experiences that have been created. As the program evolves, the need for evidence that demonstrates impact becomes greater. MCE's findings also show that the financial capital granted to grantees has a direct impact on community members.

Additionally, the wealth of intellectual and social capital should be documented and used as evidence to speak to program success. Since these benefits naturally fall into three categories (i.e., financial capital, social capital and intellectual capital) there is room to expand the measures used to document program success. MCE recommends that NTP staff and grantees begin documenting these efforts in ways that hold true to the program’s vision and project’s goals and tell a more complete picture of the impact of the work.

Below are different types of capital that NTP should monitor, track and report when documenting this program’s impact.

- **Intellectual Capital:** may be evidenced by tracking thought partnership shared via convenings, regional meetings, advisor sessions, advocacy and civic engagement, innovation and creative solutions, expanded stakeholder mindsets, and aesthetic enrichment.
- **Social Capital:** may be evidenced by tracking new relationships built, new lines of communication generated, collaborations that emerge, new opportunities created, leveraging personal connections, trust, and cooperation.
- **Financial Capital:** may be evidenced by tracking event attendance, grant money granted/received, tour locations and shifted operations.  
*\*often reported or documented\**

Below is a table with NTP’s goals. In the table, we’ve outlined the type of capital that appears to be related to each goal to assist NTP’s team with monitoring and tracking. MCE recommends developing an evaluation plan to support continued activity.

**TABLE 12: NTP GOALS**

NTP Goals	Intellectual Capital	Social Capital	Financial Capital
Support the creation/development and United States touring of new artist-led devised, ensemble theater works that demonstrate excellence in the artists’ practice.	×	×	×
Support work that contributes to the cultural and aesthetic diversity of today’s theater.	×		×
Reflect meaningful partnerships with presenters, producers, and other organizations that are involved in the development, promotion, and/or touring of the new work.	×	×	×
Offer the potential to deepen engagement because of the work’s relevance, originality, and/or timeliness.	×	×	
Produce a viable plan for touring the supported work in multiple communities in the U.S. and its territories.	×		×

MCE recommends that NTP staff assess and document their work toward these goals by recording when and how they do something to support one of the capital measures noted above. Perhaps use the surveys created for this evaluation in the future. Likewise, through grant reporting, MCE recommends that NTP revisit its program guidelines and consider which capital types are being leveraged and ask grantees to report their progress in these areas. In some cases, MCE has witnessed progress when a funder covers the costs to have an evaluator come and support this effort to document impact. If that is not possible, maybe invite an evaluator to host a workshop and consultations to learn and practice how to develop and document realistic financial and intellectual capital performance measures for their grants.

## STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION #8

### Review and reallocate staff time and resources to prevent burnout.

NTP staff have maintained close and timely communication with NTP’s stakeholders through every phase of the program. The NTP stakeholders regularly remark that they feel valued, heard and seen by the NTP staff. Unfortunately, the level of effort required to support and deliver this program leaves NTP staff at capacity with very little time to focus on program refinement. Without additional support, NTP staff are stretched thin, additional opportunities for program development remain unmet, and NTP is limited in its ability to optimally reach its target groups. The program could benefit from another full time staff member that could focus their efforts on refining program resources and activities.

Consider the following suggestions:

- Consider hosting NTP Fellows to support the additional NTP administrative work.
- Create opportunities for NEFA leadership to strategize ways to prevent burnout on the NTP team.



# APPENDIX A

## NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT MATERIALS INCLUDED IN THE DOCUMENT REVIEW

National Theater Project Evaluation Documentation	
2016 Roles and Expectations of Advisors	FY2018-2020 Andrew Mellon Foundation 2020 Final Report
2017 NTP Prospective Advisor Questionnaire	FY2018-2020 Andrew Mellon Foundation Proposal
2018 Advising Survey for Artists	FY2019-2020 Doris Duke Foundation Proposal
2019 Doris Duke Foundation Interim Report	FY2021-2023 Doris Duke Foundation Proposal
2020 Doris Duke Foundation Final Report	FY2021-2023 Andrew Mellon Foundation Interim Report 2021
2021 Doris Duke Foundation Interim Report	FY2021-2023 Andrew Mellon Foundation Proposal
Advisor Final Panel Meeting Notes 2012-2021	Lessons from National Theater Pilot
Advisor Preliminary Panel Meeting Notes 2012-2021	Links Document
All Advisors Pilot-2021 Dataset	National Theater Project Cohort 3 and 4 Evaluation Report
Application and Report Questions (2017-Present)	National Theater Project Cohort 4-6 Evaluation Report Draft
Artist Development Grant Reports 2014-2020	National Theater Project Advisor Agreement 2022
BACKGROUND-NTP Document Review Materials	National Theater Project Pilot Phase Evaluation Report
Creation and Touring Grant Frequently Asked Questions List 2013-2021	Notes for Pre Evaluation Conversation with Advisors 2019
Creation and Touring Grant Reports Rounds 1-10	NTP Advisor Thinkboard
Creation and Touring Grant Sample Contracts 2011-2021	NTP Andrew Mellon Foundation Budget Modification Narrative May 7, 2021
Creation and Touring All Time - Touring Amount Remaining	NTP Andrew Mellon Foundation Repurposing Request April 28, 2020
Doris Duke Foundation NTP Budget Modification Narrative April 27, 2020	NTP Artist Development Grants Dataset
Doris Duke Foundation NTP Budget Modification Narrative August 5, 2020	NTP Brainstorm What If?... How Do We?
Doris Duke Foundation NTP Budget Modification Narrative May 17, 2021	NTP Cohort Meeting Notes 2012, 2014-2020
FY2013-2015 Andrew Mellon Foundation 2013 Interim Report	NTP Creation & Touring Grant Webinar Slide Decks 2016, 2018, 2019, 2021
FY2013-2015 Andrew Mellon Foundation 2014 Interim Report	NTP Creation and Touring Criteria and Application questions - All Time
FY2013-2015 Andrew Mellon Foundation 2015 Final Report	NTP Creation and Touring Grants 2010-2022 Dataset
FY2013-2015 Andrew Mellon Foundation Proposal	NTP Evaluation Document Review Questions and Answers
FY2015-2017 Andrew Mellon Foundation 2015 Interim Report	NTP Grantee Booklets 2010-2019
FY2015-2017 Andrew Mellon Foundation 2016 Interim Report	NTP Grantee Webinar Slide Deck 2021
FY2015-2017 Andrew Mellon Foundation 2017 Interim Report	NTP Inquiries All Time (Missing Pilot Round 1)
FY2015-2017 Andrew Mellon Foundation Proposal	NTP Phase Snapshots
FY2018-2020 Andrew Mellon Foundation 2018 Interim Report	NTP Phase Snapshots
FY2018-2020 Andrew Mellon Foundation 2019 Interim Report	NTP Pilot Andrew Mellon Foundation Final Report September 30, 2015

National Theater Project Evaluation Documentation (continued)	
NTP Pilot Andrew Mellon Foundation Interim Report June 28,2013	NTP Special Projects: Art & Survival 2016 Grant Request
NTP Pilot Andrew Mellon Foundation Interim Report June 30,2011	NTP Special Projects: Art & Survival 2018 Grant Request
NTP Pilot Andrew Mellon Foundation Interim Report June 30,2012	NTP Special Projects: Consortium Of Asian American Theaters and Artists   7th National Asian American Confest Hawaii Grant Request
NTP Pilot Andrew Mellon Foundation Interim Report March 20,2014	NTP Special Projects: Pride Youth Theater Alliance Conference Grant Request 2018-2019
NTP Pilot Andrew Mellon Foundation Interim Report: NEFA Budget vs Actual for Grant June 30,2012	NTP Team Building 2021 Astrology Charts
NTP Pilot Andrew Mellon Foundation Interim Report: NEFA Final Interim Report for NTP June 30, 2012	NTP Tour Coordinator and Artist Info Session Slide Decks 2016-2021
NTP Pilot Round 1: Project Notes	NTP Transition Grants All Time Dataset
NTP Pilot: Round 1: Advisor Application Comments	NTP Visioning Exercise 2021 Part 1
NTP Pilot: Round 1: Applicant Survey Questions 9.22.10	NTP Visioning Exercise 2021 Part 2
NTP Pilot: Round 1: Letter to Advisors FINAL	Presentation Grant Reports Rounds 1-10
NTP Pilot: Round 1: NTP Round 1 Panel Meeting Notes 9.28 & 29.10	Presenter Travel Grant Reports 2013-2022
NTP Pilot: Round 1: NTP Talking Points, FAQs, and Notes for Future Rounds 9.8.2010	Recording of Pre Evaluation Conversation with Advisors 2019
NTP Pilot: Round 1: Review Considerations	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Program Coordinator April 15,2020
NTP Pilot: Round 1: Round 1 Projects One Pager	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: FY20 NTP Staff Adjustments Memo
NTP Pilot: Round 1: Round One Respondent Survey Data 10.18.10	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: NTP Temp Position 2014
NTP Pilot: Round 1: Voting Results	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Program Associate
NTP Pilot: Round 2: Applicant Survey Summary	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Program Associate National Theater Project 2018
NTP Pilot: Round 2: Criteria Revisions 11.11	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Program Coordinator Part Time
NTP Pilot: Round 2: Funded projects 7.11	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Program Director Theater
NTP Pilot: Round 2: NTP Issues for Discussion 10.12.2010	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Program Manager
NTP Pilot: Round 2: PDF Final Application	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Project Manager
NTP Pilot: Round 2: PDF Preliminary Application	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Theater Associate
NTP Pilot: Round 2: Stats from Round 2 Preliminary Applications	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Theater Coordinator and Executive Assistant
NTP Presentation Grant Webinar 2016	Staff Roles and Responsibilities: Program Coordinator Theater, Presenting and Touring
NTP Presentation Grants 2012-2023 Dataset	Testimonials by Fiscal Year
NTP Presenter Travel Grants Pilot -2023 Dataset	Touring Activity Dataset
NTP Program Thinkboard	Transition Grant Reports 2016-2020
NTP Special Projects: API Arts Network Grant Request 2018	

# APPENDIX B

## NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

First Name	Last Name	Ensemble or Organization
Andrea	Assaf	Art2Action
Byron	Au Yong	Byron Au Yong and Aaron Jafferis
Daniel	Banks	DNAWorks
Eric	Bass	Sandglass Theater
Leilani	Chan	TeAda Productions
Eugenie	Chan	Eugenie Chan Theater Projects
Patricia	Cruz	Harlem Stage
Sage	Crump	Complex Movements
Kyle	DeVries	Black Benatar's Black Magic Cabaret
David	Dower	ArtsEmerson
Cathy	Edwards	International Festival of Arts & Ideas
Nathalie	Faulk	Last Call History Project
Susan	Feder	Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Candace L	Feldman	Unlock Creative
Rebecca	Finney	Roadside Theater/Appalshop
Matthew	Glassman	Double Edge Theatre
Brooke	Horejsi	UtahPresents
Mara	Isaacs	Varied
Baba	Israel	Baba Israel
Nancy	Keystone	Critical Mass Performance Group
Aaron	Landsman	Aaron Landsman, Mallory Catlett, Jim Findlay
Angela	Lee	Hayti Heritage Center
Clemente	Luna	Brooklyn Academy of Music

First Name	Last Name	Ensemble or Organization
Meena	Malik	New England Foundation for the Arts
Jonathan	McCrary	National Black Theatre, Inc.
Stephanie	McKee	Junebug Productions
Muriel	Miguel	Spiderwoman Theater
Sydney	Mosley	Sydney L. Mosley Dances
Rebecca	Mwase	Rebecca Mwase & Ron Ragin
Meena	Natarajan	Pangea World Theater
Lillian	Osei-Boateng	Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
Linda	Parris-Bailey	Carpetbag Theatre, Parris-Bailey Arts
Ronee	Penoi	ArtsEmerson and Transit Lounge
Marc	Pinate	Borderlands Theater
Jane	Preston	New England Foundation for the Arts
Michael	Reed	ASU Gammage
Derek	Schwartz	New England Foundation for the Arts
Nicholas	Slie	Mondo Bizarro
Quita	Sullivan	New England Foundation for the Arts
Carlton	Turner	Mississippi Center for Cultural Production
Mark	Valdez	Mark-n-Sparks / Network of Ensemble Theaters / Mixed Blood Theater
Clyde	Valentin	Hi Arts, Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University
Megan	Wanlass	Cornerstone Theater Company
Jonathan	Wei	The She Chronicles
Jacob	Yarrow	Green Music Center, Sonoma State University

# APPENDIX C

## NATIONAL THEATER PROJECT ADVISORS

Name	Advisor Tenure
Pia Agrawal	2020-2022
Claudia Alick	2019-2022
Byron Au Yong	2017-2019
Daniel Banks	2022
Alison Carey	2019-2019
P. Carl	2015-2017
Patricia Cruz	2016-2018
Shoshona Currier	2016-2017
Lane Czaplinski	2013-2015
David Dower	2010-2014
Cathy Edwards	2010-2014
Nathalie Faulk	2022
Candace L Feldman	2017-2020
Jarvis Green	2021-2022
Charles Helm	2010-2014
Brooke Horejsi	2018-2020
Micah Ariel James	2020-2021
Morgan Jenness	2010-2012
Colleen Jennings-Roggensack	2012-2015
Michael Kondziolka	2010-2012
Todd London	2018-202
Keryl McCord	2017-2019
Jonathan McCrory	2019-2021
Edgar Miramontes	2020-2022

Name	Advisor Tenure
Raelle Nina Myrick-Hodges	2014-2016
Meena Natarajan	2015-2017
Rob Orchard	2010-2011
Linda Parris-Bailey	2020-2021
Ronee Penoi	2019-2022
Steven Raider Ginsburg	2019-2021
Amrita Ramanan	2021-2022
Robert Richter	2015-2018
Diane Rodriguez	2010-2014
Mike Ross	2013-2015
Mildred Ruiz-Sapp	2022
Mark Russell	2010-2012
Howard Shalwitz	2012-2014
Lisa Steindler	2012-2016, 2018
DeLanna Studi	2021-2022
Leslie Tamaribuchi	2019-2022
Carlton Turner	2013-2016
Mark Valdez	2015-2018
Clyde Valentin	2010-2013, 2016-2018
Shay Wafer	2012
Meiyin Wang	2013-2015
Jacob Yarrow	2015-2019
Torange Yeghiazarian	2022

# APPENDIX D

## NTP SPECIAL PROJECT GRANTS

Year	Project Name	Summary	Award Amount
2016	Art and Survival	<p>Art and Survival convening was a heart-first exploration of some of the most pressing questions in our field. NTP hosted 61 individuals from 11 states representing 27 organizations that included foundations, colleges, universities, consulting firms, playwrights, actors, directors, and visual artists as well as the Double Edge Company.</p> <p>The intention was a deeper sense of connection, meaning, and resources, as well as a greater understanding of the theater ecology. They used three lenses to guide a series of conversations: 1) Esoteric/Mysticism, 2) Land Narratives, and 3) Social Movements/Imagination. They conducted creative asset mapping, identifying resources and needs amongst themselves and ways they could partner to share. They sought to establish through lines and next steps, ending in a group reflection. The synthesized message of the three dialogues was one of collective exchange, alternative creative economy, land stewardship and the philosophical/spiritual underpinnings necessary to sustain these ambitious projects. In short, they created a community around shared values.</p>	\$5,000
2018	API Network	<p>Since its launch in 2017, the API Arts Network has concentrated on growing, strengthening, and diversifying its steering committee to encourage interdisciplinary and intergenerational collaboration. They have programmed five public membership networking programs, about one a quarter. With support from the grant, the network launched its logo and branding guidelines.</p> <p>Other outcomes outlined in the Network’s original proposal include: modeling finances, finalizing the mission, and establishing evaluation metrics.</p> <p>Participation in the network has allowed BCNC and the Pao Arts Center to better serve its mission of supporting Asian Pacific Islander artists and communities in Greater Boston and the region. By convening and connecting artists and cultural practitioners and administrators, the organization has been able to increase its connection to the API arts community and directly support artists beyond the scope of regular Pao Arts Center programming. It has allowed the Center to support important national productions such as Susan Lieu’s 140 Lbs, which sold out 4 shows over the course of a weekend at the Center. The Network has allowed the Center to make its space more accessible to members of the community and increased the Center’s visibility.</p> <p>Members of the network affiliated with organizations have more opportunities to align beyond their joint collaborative work. By providing a structure and reason to meet and discuss programming for the Network, the relationships for these organizations also become stronger and allow for more potential collaboration. For example, Company 1 and BCNC are collaborating on hosting a joint playwriting fellowship. ArtsEmerson has been able to convene members from the Network to examine how the theater can specifically be a resource to meet the need of API artists.</p>	\$10,000

Year	Project Name	Summary	Award Amount
2018 & 2019	Pride Youth Theater Alliance	<p>Queer Youth Theater offers queer and allied youth safe spaces to creatively express themselves while providing unique methods for representing and empowering queer voices in their community. The Pride Youth Theater Alliance is a growing network that advances the practice of Queer Youth Theater by providing emerging and established leaders in the field with resources and opportunities to exchange, collaborate, and learn. The conference features local artists performing throughout the conference as a way for attendees to witness the local arts scene and to be able to network with artists. Topics included Theater of the Oppressed, Facilitating Social Justice Workshops, Empowering Youth Voices Through Improve, Arts &amp; Healing, Rehearsing Interventions on Gender Based Oppression, Gender Exploration in Process Drama, Power in Pride, and more. The NTP grant also helped NTP artists participate in these conferences.</p> <p>The 2018 conference was attended by 100 program leaders and program participants of LGBTQ youth theater programs from across the country. An additional 65 people not registered attended conference activities that were open to the public.</p> <p>The 2019 conference was attended by 71 program leaders and program participants of LGBTQ youth theater programs from across the country. An additional 31 people not registered attended conference activities that were open to the public.</p>	\$10,000
2020	CAATA Conference	<p>The Consortium of Asian American Theaters and Artists is a collective of Asian American theater leaders and artists that brings together local and regional leaders to work nationally toward shared values of social justice, artistic diversity, and cultural and racial equity. They hold national conferences and festivals biennially in different parts of the country, reaching as wide a range of Asian American populations and communities as possible.</p> <p>Over 500 Asian American theater practitioners, directors, administrators, artists, local refugee communities and allies were scheduled to participate in the 2020 CAATA Conference. The vision for Confest was to focus on working with Natives Hawaiian, Indigenous, Pacific Islander to coalition-build with other POC affinity groups between Hawai'i and the continent. The conference was canceled due to COVID-19.</p>	\$10,000

## FOOTNOTES

1. NEFA defines the U.S. as all 50 of the United States, as well as Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.
2. NTP uses the following definitions for (1) Ensemble: A group of two or more people committed to working together over time to develop a distinct practice and body of work. (2) Devised: A process of co-creation and joint discovery that prioritizes generative artists, which may include but does not prioritize playwrights, is iterative, and results in original work.
3. NEFA values an equitable, diverse, and inclusive world, which is interpreted as all people having fair access to the tools and resources they need to realize creative and community endeavors. NEFA acknowledges structural inequities that have excluded individuals and communities from opportunity based on race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, class, age, language, culture, nation of origin, and geography, and strive to counter those inequities in their work.
4. The COVID-19 temporarily postponed the launch of this evaluation.
5. NTP records didn't clearly outline those that served multiple roles in the program although multiple roles were cited in the survey data. Insights on varied roles appeared across documentation and through conversations with NTP staff. The first column shows those roles that NTP tracked in their records. The second column shows how many NTP designated roles responded to the survey.
6. The NTP ecosystem will be further defined in the findings section of this report.
7. The NTP criteria outlined describes what must be present in the application to be considered eligible and competitive.
8. Because of the number of NTP grants awarded (and noted above), this report does not list all NTP grant recipients. To find a complete list of NTP grantees please visit <https://www.nefa.org/grants-programs/grant-recipients>
9. Presentation Grants are taken out of Creation and Touring Grants.
10. This number does not include presentation grants, because that money is already represented in the creation and touring grant amounts.
11. Finalists survey respondents were able to choose all that apply. The chart above is reflective of all responses submitted.
12. Survey respondents were able to choose all that apply. The chart above is reflective of all responses submitted.
13. Data in this chart covers efforts conducted between 2015-2021. Before 2015, there was a different recordkeeping process and those data weren't readily available.
14. Respondents identified more than one ethnic group within their ensemble.
15. Respondents were able to choose all that apply. The table above is reflective of all responses submitted.
16. Respondents were able to choose all that apply. The chart above is reflective of all responses submitted.
17. Impacts noted in the figures were shared by at least 50% of the study participants.

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*Traditional lands of the Massachusetts and the Wampanoag Peoples*

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