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## **University of Florida and ArtPlace America launch national initiative for arts and public health**

*Two-year initiative to build intersections and establish resources for practitioners*

**Gainesville, Fla.**—At the intersection of public health, arts and culture lies the potential for building stronger and healthier communities in America.

The [University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine](#) in partnership with [ArtPlace America](#) is launching “Creating Healthy Communities: Arts + Public Health in America,” a two-year national initiative designed to accelerate innovation at the intersections of the arts, creative placemaking, community development, and public health.

Beginning in May 2018 and culminating in April 2020, the initiative aims to build healthy communities in alignment with national public health goals through strategic cross-sector collaboration, research, translation, and resource sharing.

“Artists have long worked as allies in furthering community health, and ArtPlace is thrilled that the University of Florida is committing such serious resources to lifting up and sharing this work,” said Rip Rapson, president and CEO of [The Kresge Foundation](#) and chair of the ArtPlace President’s Council. “We look forward to strengthening the field of colleagues working at this intersection.”

While the arts are widely utilized as a means for health education and wellness promotion in communities, their applications are not fully realized, according to Jill Sonke, director of the UF Center for Arts in Medicine.

“While the arts are widely utilized within healthcare settings today, the theoretical and practical structures that can guide their use in public health are not well defined,” Sonke said. “We are really excited about building connections across the arts, creative placemaking and public health over the next two years, and about creating partnerships and resources that will help build healthier communities in America.

A team of University of Florida research scholars will lead the discovery processes using a field survey, focus groups, scoping and systematic reviews, and meta-analysis of evidence. The research strategy will explore and consolidate existing evidence and establish a national research agenda and standardized research protocols.

The research team will publish its findings and will lead the development of open-access resources, including a searchable research database and a repository of arts in public health resources expected to launch in March 2019.

Among the goals of the initiative is building a community of thought leaders and stakeholders through the development of a national consortium and five convening sessions. The first convening session takes place June 14 and 15. Hosted by the University of Cincinnati's Office of Research in Ohio, the session includes 45 field leaders in the arts, community development, academia, government, the nonprofit sector, creative placemaking, and public health. A full schedule of future convenings and associated partners follows this release.

"The University of Florida's Center for Arts in Medicine is the ideal partner to lead this effort," said Laurie Baefsky, executive director of the [Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities](#) and one of the co-hosts of this first convening. "Their depth of field expertise and track record of training our very best creative arts in health practitioners positions them to capture, amplify and apply best practices nationally.

Funded by a multi-year grant from ArtPlace America, "Creating Healthy Communities" will culminate in April 2020 with the publication of "Evidence-based Framework for Using the Arts in Public Health," intended to translate knowledge and research into practice and policy. The framework will provide public health practitioners with the resources needed to develop effective interdisciplinary partnerships, implement effective evidence-based practices and reliably measure outcomes.

"This initiative is an opportunity to leverage the pioneering work of the UF Center for Arts in Medicine with the nation's leading scholars, researchers and practitioners in arts and public health," said Lucinda Lavelli, dean of the [UF College of the Arts](#). "'Creating Healthy Communities' is a significant step in establishing the standards for future research and implementation of arts in public health that will build a better tomorrow."

Learn more at [arts.ufl.edu/healthy-communities](https://arts.ufl.edu/healthy-communities).

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## Timeline of Convening and Webinar Sessions

June 14 - 15, 2018	Working Group #1: University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH (a2ru)
October 7, 2018	Working Group #2: National Organization for Arts in Health (NOAH) Conference, Austin, TX , Austin, TX
October 31, 2018	Working Group #3: Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru) National Conference, Athens, GA
January TBA, 2019	Working Group #4: Location TBA
March 17-23, 2019	Working Group #5 and Performing Health Festival at the University of Florida
March 2019	Resource Repository Launch
April 17, 2019	Webinar #1
May 15, 2019	Webinar #2
June 2019	Publication: White Paper
June 12, 2019	Webinar #3
September 2019	Publication: Concert & Governmental Advisory Briefs
September 11, 2019	Webinar #4
October 9, 2019	Webinar #5
November 6, 2019	Webinar #6
April 2020	Publication: Framework for Evidence-based Use of the Arts in Public Health

### About the Center for Arts in Medicine

The University of Florida Center for the Arts in Medicine is committed to advancing research, education and practice in arts in medicine, locally and globally. The Center undertakes work in three primary areas of focus: education and training, research, and outreach. Established in the College of the Arts in 1996, the Center provides a framework for interdisciplinary collaboration among University of Florida faculty and students, healthcare providers, clinical artists, and our local and global communities. The Center develops and effects interdisciplinary research studies and educational curricula on all levels and serves as a national model for the arts in medicine research, education and training. To learn more, visit [arts.ufl.edu/academics/center-for-arts-in-medicine](https://arts.ufl.edu/academics/center-for-arts-in-medicine).

### About ArtPlace America

ArtPlace America (ArtPlace) is a ten-year collaboration among 16 partner foundations, along with 8 federal agencies and 6 financial institutions, that works to position arts and culture as a core sector of comprehensive community planning and development in order to help strengthen the social, physical, and economic fabric of communities. ArtPlace focuses its work on creative placemaking, projects in which art plays an intentional and integrated role in place-based community planning and development. This brings artists, arts organizations, and artistic activity into the suite of placemaking strategies pioneered by Jane Jacobs and her colleagues, who believed that community development must be locally informed, human-centric, and holistic. [www.artplaceamerica.org](https://www.artplaceamerica.org)

**About the College of the Arts**

The College of the Arts, previously known as the College of Fine Arts, is one the 16 colleges and more than 150 research centers and institutes at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida. The College of the Arts offers baccalaureate, master’s and Ph.D. degree programs in its three fully-accredited schools — the School of Art and Art History, School of Music and School of Theatre and Dance. The college is home to the Center for Arts in Medicine, Center for World Arts, Digital Worlds Institute, University Galleries and the New World School of the Arts in Miami. More than 100 faculty members and more than 1,220 students work together daily to engage, inspire and create. The college hosts more than 300 performances, exhibitions and events each year. Faculty and students also exhibit and perform at other local, national and international venues. To learn more, visit [arts.ufl.edu](http://arts.ufl.edu).

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