

ACRE

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Year In Review 2023



0. cover image: session 1 residents sharing dinner in the acre kitchen.

1. next page: session 4 residents ruby que and vanessa virvet creating boxes for high fire in the woodshop.

photos by kate bowen

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section i

Introduction

06



In 2023 ACRE undertook a strategic process for our community to assess, document, and align around our shared values, hopes, and priorities with the intent of revisioning and restructuring our collective work within the organization.

Highlights from our Strategic Process:

1

In the spring we convened listening sessions by committee to identify shared values and key areas for growth or change. We also held open discussions in our summer workshops.

2

Community members had the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the organization's operations with presentations of key financial information and an overview of the strategic planning process.

3

We worked with facilitator Jason Tompkins to hold workshops on effective communication, cooperative models and governance culture, and consensus building.

4

We set priorities for the residency and the organization and shared hopes and dreams for the future.



“I think I most appreciated the ways that folks both new and with a lot of history with ACRE equally shared their perspectives on the project. Overall the tone of generosity and honesty made conversations really productive.”

— Session 2 Resident

all photos by
kate bowen.

2. view of the
workshop.

07

3. session 4 summer strategy session
participants discuss workshop
materials at the lodge.

4. session 3 residents gather
for a poetry reading in
front of the acre kitchen.

Summer Sessions

section ii

08



* Our work included:

5. raw materials awaiting activation just off the woodshop at sunset. photo by kate bowen.

100 Artists
8 Listening Sessions
4 Nine Day Community Residencies
3 Days of Facilitated Workshops in Each Session

Common themes emphasized by community members:

- The importance of **community, collaboration, and networking** within and beyond the residency.
- The significance of **accountability and inclusivity** in our organizational culture.
- ▲ Nurturing a unique operational culture that promotes **open communication, safety, and a sense of belonging**.
- A collective desire to participate in decision making.
- ✦ Nurturing a culture of care.

Community Priorities:

- Implement Inclusive Decision-Making Models
- Create Systems for Transparent Communication
- ▲ Establish Conflict Resolution Strategies
- Promote Equitable Distribution of Power
- ✦ Create Learning and Adaptive Structures
- Codify Strategic Planning with the Community

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* Residency Studios & Skill Sharing ▾

Participants of the summer sessions also had access to the residency studios, opportunities to skill-share with their peers, and took advantage of the time and space to rest and recharge.

Our 8 Studio Areas



Ceramics

Fibers

Woodshop

High Fire

Screen Printing

A/V Tech

Sound

Performance Stage

Artist-initiated programs and workshops included:

- (1) foraging and natural dyeing / (2) *shibori dyeing* /
- (3) sand casting and aluminum pouring / (4) *mold making* /
- (5) welding and blacksmithing / (6) *writing workshops* /
- (7) poetry reading / (8) *creating glass emulsion with cyanotypes* /
- (9) weaving workshops / (10) *lathe workshop and bowl turning* /
- (11) music performances / (12) *film screenings*

6. high fire
aluminum pour.
photo by
kate bowen.

7. session 2 residents print
t-shirts at the screenprinting
studio. photo by kate bowen.

8. session 1 resident
allison cekala performs
in the sound studio.
photo by kate bowen.

9. next page: acre alum and staff
member allen moore performs
for guests of friends and family
weekend in the sound studio, june
10, 2023. photo by levi shand.



* Residency Hosting:

This summer we also hosted residencies and retreats for →

“I came to the retreat and was treated to books, art and community. The food was 5 star and the staff was super friendly and informative. The property and views were inspiring. The studios are amazing and efficiently set up to inspire. I truly appreciated this opportunity to dive back into my practice with such support.”

— WILD YAMS Resident

1 Wild Yams: Black Mothers Artist Residency

Wild Yams: Black Mothers Artist Residency is an art residency experience designed to support, uplift and encourage artist sustainability for Black mothers on the South Side of Chicago.

2 BULK Space Artist Residency

BULK Space is an artist-collective dedicated to uplifting the works of marginalized creatives in taking up physical and digital space.

3 Duns Scotus Project Retreat for honors students from the University of St. Francis.

The Duns Scotus Honors Program fosters a community of scholars who aim to integrate knowledge with reflection, commitment, and service to develop wisdom with humility.



10.



11.



12.

all photos by
kate bowen.

10. wild yams resident summer
coleman works in the workshop.

15

11. wild yams group gathers at
the stage to offer a libation.

12. wild yams group photo
outside the acre kitchen.

13. apero hour spread at acre donor event. logan square, september 30, 2023. photo by kate bowen.



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14. ploughman's brunch for guests of friends and family weekend at the lodge, june 11, 2023. photo by levi shand.



ACRE section iii Kitchen

15. next page: session 3 pizza night at the acre kitchen. photo by kate bowen.

* 144 Locally-Sourced Meals ▾

The ACRE Kitchen provides healthy and creative meals while supporting sustainable food producers in the Driftless region of Wisconsin.

♥ We hosted an end-of-season cookout and residency tour with our local farm partners and vendors whose produce and products provide nourishing meals to ACRE artists.

Our Local Farm Partners:

- i. Harmony Valley → 2013-present
- ii. Kickapoo Exchange Co-op → 2013-present
- iii. Liberty Ridge Farm → 2019-present
- iv. Mountain Lane Beef Farm → 2023-present
- v. St Brigid's Meadows → 2016-present
- vi. Tortilleria Zepeda → 2022-present

17





16a.



16b.

20

16. documentation of the exhibition a tax on a bag and other landscapes, featuring work by frances lee. university of illinois springfield visual arts gallery. january 17 to february 16, 2023.

section iv

Exhibitions

* About Our Exhibitions Program ▾

Our Exhibitions Program provides artists opportunities to expand their practice, develop professionally, and build community with a thriving nationwide network of peers and arts professionals.

In 2023 ACRE presented solo and group exhibitions at ACRE Projects and partner galleries Blanc Gallery and The University of Illinois Springfield. We also held an artist talk in conjunction with EXPO Chicago and an Artist Tax Prep Workshop.

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New Partnership:

A new partnership between ACRE and The Arts of Club of Chicago offered a free yearly membership to the Arts Club for an ACRE alumni. 2023's inaugural member is artist Kushala Vora.



Exhibitions

2023

all photos by
kate bowen.



18a.

17. left page: documentation of the exhibition
perhaps blue is a cool color, after all,
featuring work by escosa edbirri. acre
projects, april 6 to 28, 2023.

23



18b.

18. opening reception for the exhibition perhaps
blue is a cool color, after all, featuring work
by escosa edbirri. acre projects, april 6, 2023.



18c.

Chicago Arts Census

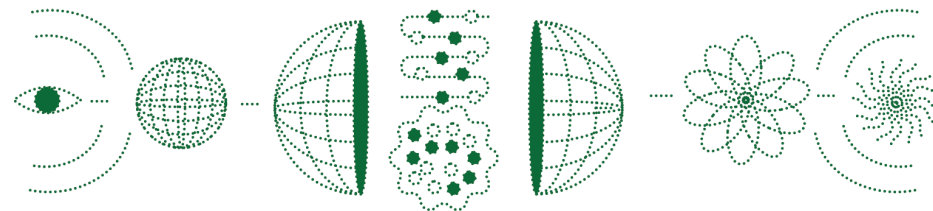
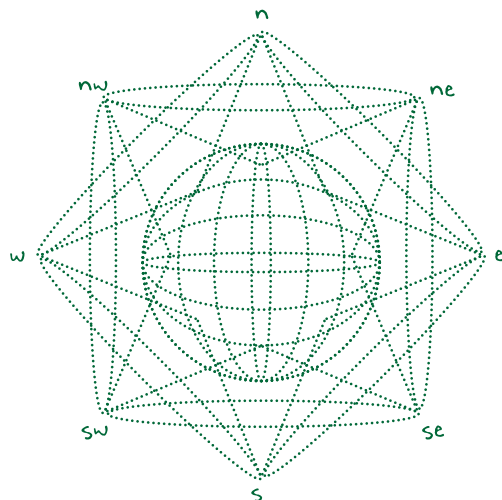
section v

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* About the Chicago Arts Census ▾

A cross-discipline data collection effort created by and with the art workers of Chicago.

2,583 survey responses to date →



Data Insights ▾

More than **2,500** individuals have responded to the Chicago Arts Census, yielding **tens of thousands** of quantitative data points and more than **6,000** qualitative responses that participants granted permission to share.

25

Data Synthesizing

The Chicago Arts Census team has devoted 2023 to reading, coding, and synthesizing thousands of responses to get to a point of deeper understanding about the complexities and systems at play in Chicago's arts ecosystem.

Accessible Maps and Visualizations

Independent data scientist Leonardo Figueiredo joined us in 2023 to help create accessible maps and visualizations in anticipation of making this information available to the public.

Arts Census Phase Two

In late July, we welcomed new Arts Census Program Director Anthony Stepter, who will manage the project through phase two. A revamped Arts Census newsletter was distributed in October as we move toward the reporting phase of the Census project.

all photos by
ryan bach.

19. music performance by midnight
minds at acre summer daze event.
music house, may 28, 2023.



19a

26

20. guests enjoy a picnic meal by acre
kitchen at acre summer daze event.
music house, may 28, 2023.



20.

19b.



Events section vi

* Highlights From Our Community Gatherings ▾

We kicked off the summer and our 14th residency season with **Summer Daze**, featuring music sets, artist vendors, kids activities, and an ACRE Kitchen meal.

We hosted our second annual **Friends + Family Weekend** up at the farm and residency in Steuben. ACRE supporters witnessed the beauty of the Driftless landscape, enjoyed delicious farm-to-table dining, and experienced firsthand our multifaceted residency environment.

We brought back our annual Halloween party, **Zombi Disco**, at venue partner Color Club. Numerous ACRE alumni contributed to this carnival of spooky delights, with decorations, music, food, and an epic costume contest.

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21. next page: communal table set for a balkan
feast served to guests of friends and family
weekend in the acre kitchen, june 10, 2023.
photo by levi shand.

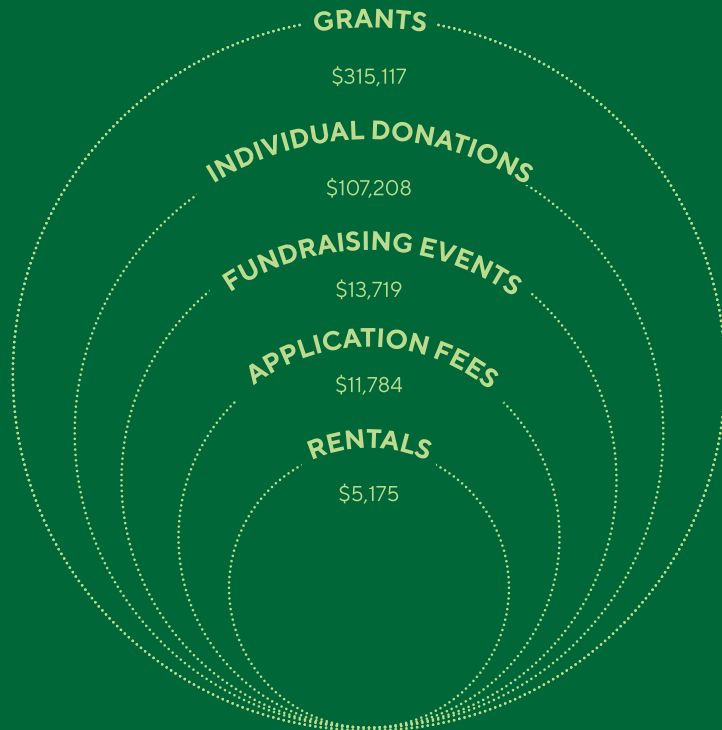


Income and Expenses

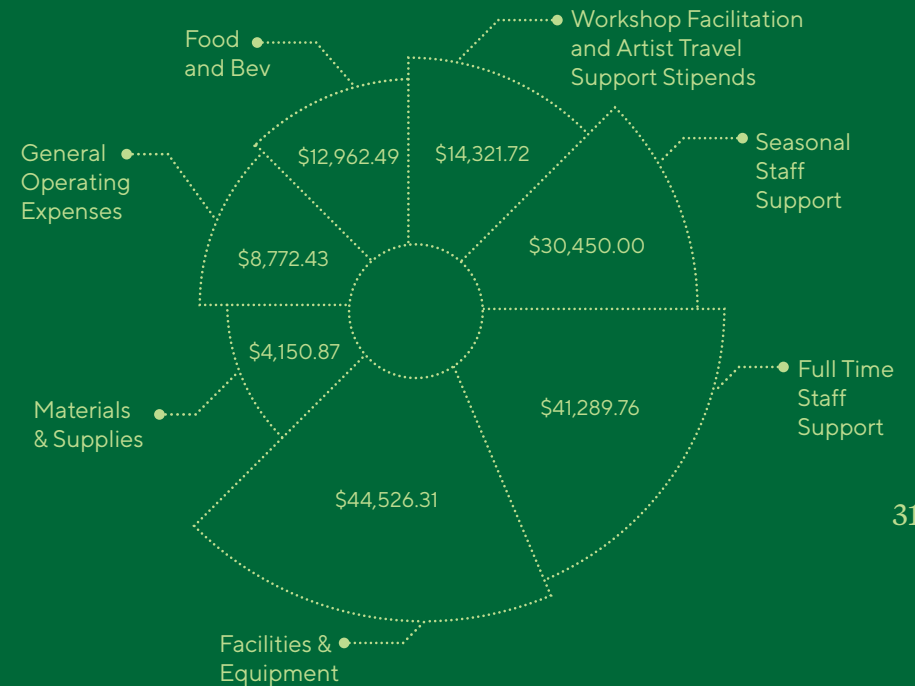
section vii

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* Income ▾

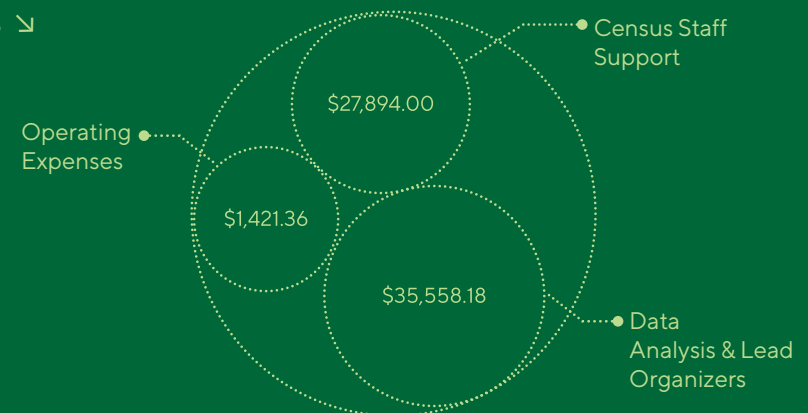


* Residency ▾

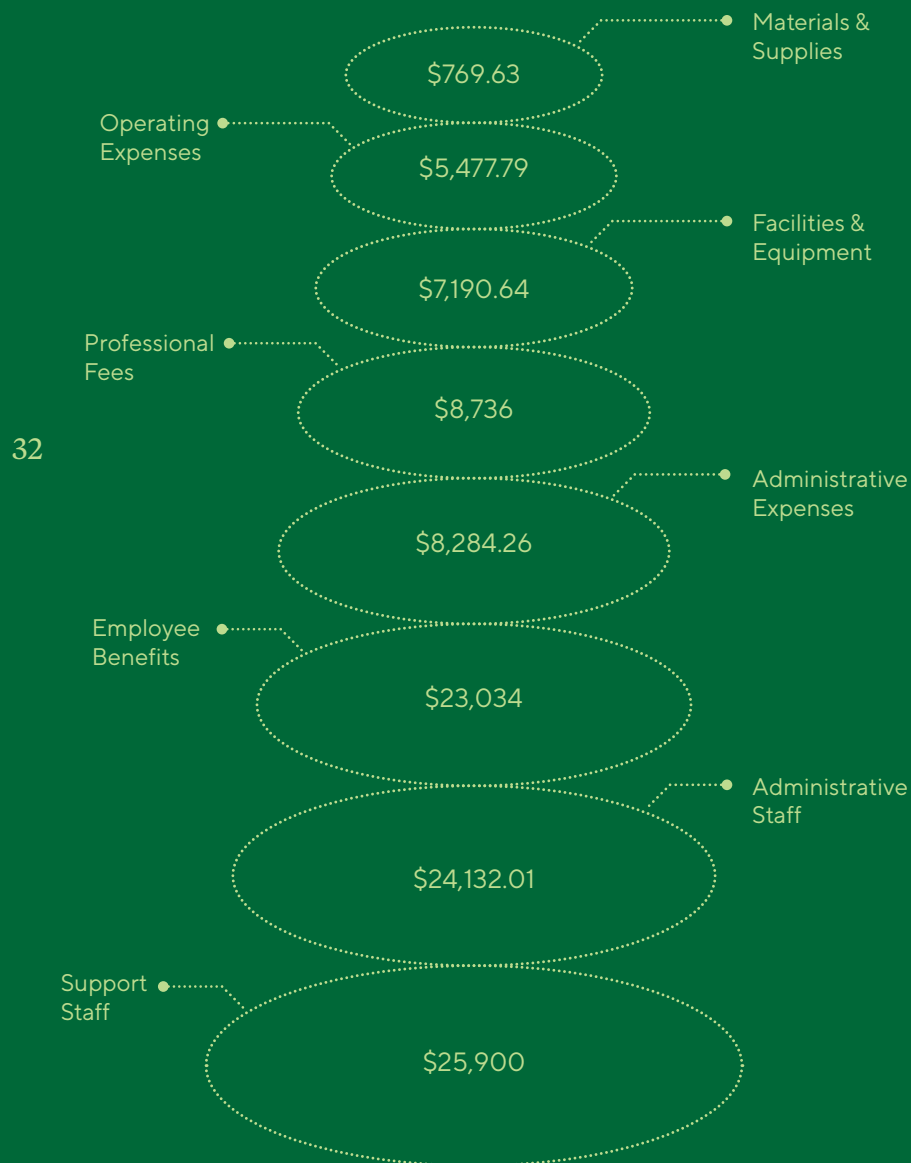


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* Chicago Arts Census ▾



* General Operations ▾



* ACRE's Transition Towards Seasonal Staff Support and Continued Volunteer Contributions ▾

ACRE increased the number of staff members to four this year. At the residency, we are beginning to transition from an all volunteer model to seasonal staff support. Volunteers will continue to be an integral part of the residency, shaping the program, leading the studio areas, and serving as mentors. We are emphasizing our values in these shifts, ensuring that the experience we provide for residents is well cared for and that staff are well supported.

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Personnel:

{Admin Staff}

Executive Director
\$55,000/FT

Development Director
\$52,000/FT

Programs Director
\$50,000/FT

Residency Manager
\$30,000/PT

{Seasonal Residency Staff}

**Operations Manager,
Kitchen Manager,
Kitchen Lead,
On-Call Support**
\$30,450

{Year-Round Contractors}

**Chicago Arts Census
Lead Organizers⁽³⁾,
Events Coordinator,
Web Admin**
\$49,000

2023 Program Funders ▾

Builders Initiative
Walder Foundation
Chicago Department of
Cultural Affairs and
Special Events
Ruth Foundation for
the Arts
MacArthur Funds for
Culture, Equity, and the
Arts at the Richard H.
Driehaus Foundation
Gaylord & Dorothy
Donnelley Foundation

Arts Work Fund
National Endowment
for the Arts
Illinois Arts Council Agency
Chrysalis Project,
supported by the
Andrew W. Mellon
Foundation
and hosted by
Fractured Atlas

Annual Sponsorship ▾

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Richard Wright
Jay Dandy and Melissa
Weber

Document
Other People's Pixels

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