Doors Open
Evaluation Framework

4 CULTURE

SEIA

4Culture tabling at the SeaTac Farmers Market, Summer 2024. Photo by Timothy Aguero Photography.

Introduction

King County Executive Dow Constantine proposed Ordinance 19710, creating the King County Doors Open cultural access program in Fall, 2023, and King County Council passed the initiative unanimously in December of the same year, creating a new funding source to be facilitated by 4Culture, King County's designated cultural funding agency. As listed in the ordinance, multiple outcomes are anticipated from the estimated $700 million increase in public funding over seven years, distributed annually at approximately $100 million each year to the county's nonprofit organizations focused on arts, heritage, science, and preservation. This evaluation framework outlines the strategy to understand the impact of this investment, particularly in the county's underserved areas, and to identify the future steps needed to increase cultural opportunity access further. It also fulfills a requirement in the ordinance. The accompanying Doors Open Evaluation Plan provides additional detail about how this evaluation strategy will be implemented over the next several years.

4Culture

Chartered in 2003, 4Culture is a Public Development Authority (PDA) that serves as the cultural funding agency for Washington State's King County. 4Culture is funded by King County's Lodging Tax revenue and the 1% for Art Ordinance, as well as the recent Doors Open legislation, which is a 0.1% sales tax dedicated to creating an equitable cultural access program that supports arts, heritage, science, and preservation nonprofit organizations. 4Culture supports a wide array of cultural programming and endeavors, utilizing public resources to ensure access for all residents to the various cultural experiences available in King County. The following mission, vision, and values provide the basis on which 4Culture operates and guide its decisions, actions, and strategies toward achieving its objectives. This evaluation framework was designed to align with 4Culture's mission, vision, and values, while meeting objectives specific to Doors Open.

MISSION

With a focus on racial equity, we fund, support, and advocate for culture to enhance the quality of life in King County.

VISION

We envision a vibrant county where culture is essential and accessible to all.

VALUES

Culture is a right for all: The right to express and experience culture lies at the core of who we are individually and as a community. We protect and advance this right for everyone.

Culture is multifaceted: We focus our efforts on Public Art, Preservation, Heritage, Science & Technology, and Arts to support the intersecting and evolving disciplines, forms, and places where culture is expressed and experienced.

Connectivity with communities: Communities hold past knowledge, current-day experience, and future vision. We work authentically with communities where they are to address issues they prioritize most.

Responsiveness: We prioritize innovation and experimentation that meets the changing needs and unexpected opportunities within communities.

Good stewardship: We make fiscally responsible decisions through a transparent process involving the voices of peers from each discipline we serve.

Racial equity: We acknowledge that systemic inequity takes many forms—racism, sexism, ableism, transphobia, heterosexism, and more. Our focus on racial equity provides us with the tools we use to dismantle all oppressions.

Doors Open Evaluation Principles

Evaluation as a practice involves the collection and analysis of evidence to answer questions and build understanding. There are many different "flavors" of evaluation depending on the types of questions you are concerned with, the program maturity and complexity, and available resources. These principles summarize 4Culture's values and priorities related to the Doors Open evaluation to help make consistent decisions and investments and prioritize evaluation resources.

- Evaluation activities should focus on building and communicating evidence related to the Doors Open Theory of Change and 4Culture's responsibility to manage public funds in the public interest.

- The evaluation should align with 4Cultures mission, vision, and core values.

- Evaluation activities should seek to balance respondent burden with the need to collect data and account for public funds. Attend to equity by matching evaluation requests to respondent capacity.

- Where possible, evaluation capacity (the set of skills and a learning mindsets required for evaluation) should be developed across the entire organization and across cultural organizations in King County.

- Seek opportunities to benefit data providers as well as the evaluating organizations by providing technical assistance, allocating appropriate resources for participating in evaluation activities, and sharing back results.

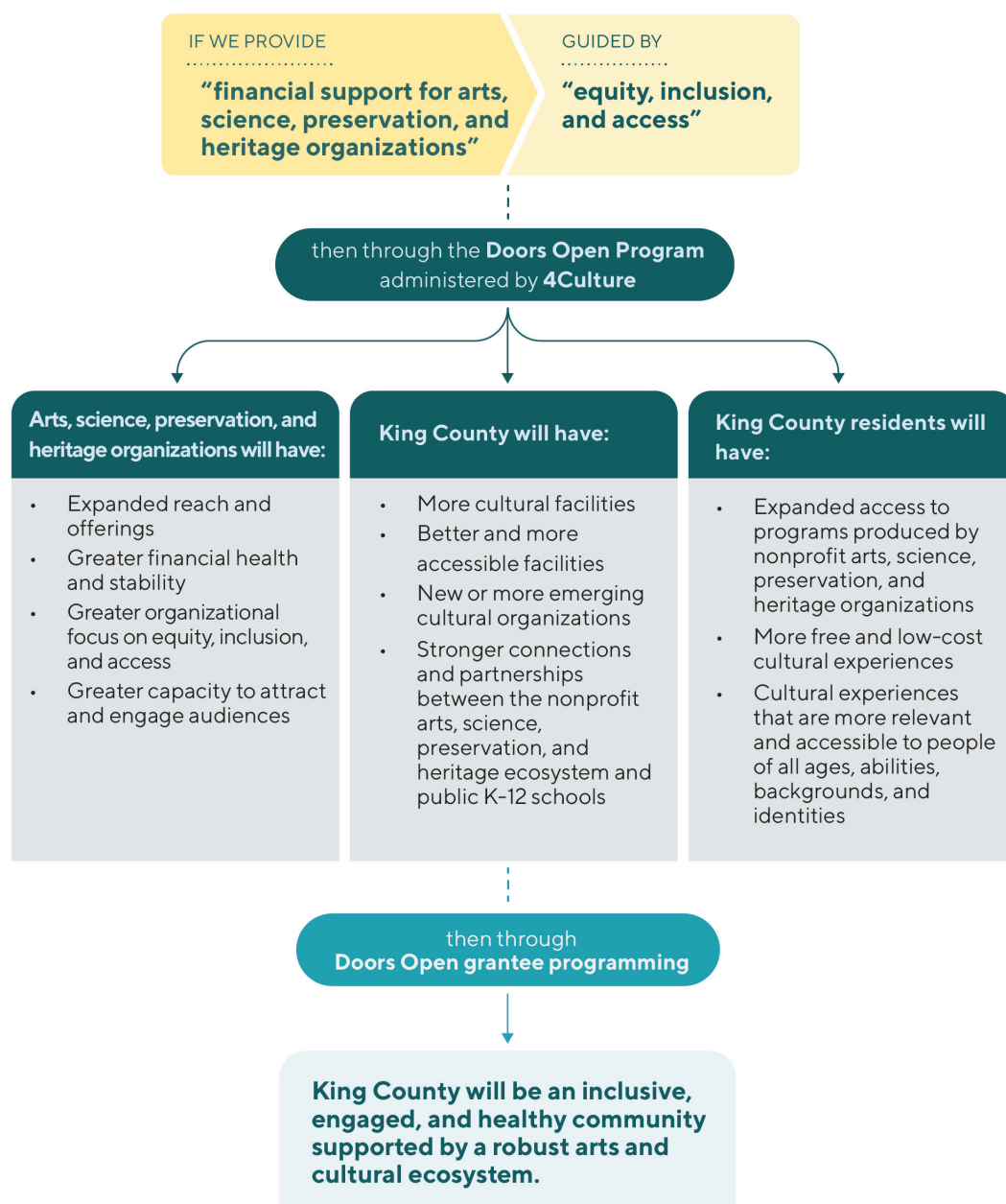*Black Farmers Collective, Photo by Raymond Williams*

Framework: The Doors Open Theory of Change

Evaluation studies the consequences, or outcomes, of certain actions. In the case of Doors Open, the action being studied is public investment in hundreds of arts and cultural programs and capacities in King County. This investment, facilitated by 4Culture, and the subsequent efforts of cultural organizations, go on to provide public benefits in the complex ecosystem that is King County. The Theory of Change describes how public investment can drive positive outcomes as explained in the Doors Open Ordinance.

DOORS OPEN THEORY OF CHANGE

Drawn from the Doors Open Ordinance, the Theory of Change explains how public financial support conceptually leads to long-term community impacts, such as health, inclusion, and engagement.

IF WE PROVIDE

"financial support for arts, science, preservation, and heritage organizations"

GUIDED BY

"equity, inclusion, and access"

then through the **Doors Open Program** administered by **4Culture**

Arts, science, preservation, and heritage organizations will have:

- Expanded reach and offerings
- Greater financial health and stability
- Greater organizational focus on equity, inclusion, and access
- Greater capacity to attract and engage audiences

King County will have:

- More cultural facilities
- Better and more accessible facilities
- New or more emerging cultural organizations
- Stronger connections and partnerships between the nonprofit arts, science, preservation, and heritage ecosystem and public K–12 schools

King County residents will have:

- Expanded access to programs produced by nonprofit arts, science, preservation, and heritage organizations
- More free and low-cost cultural experiences
- Cultural experiences that are more relevant and accessible to people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds, and identities

then through **Doors Open grantee programming**

King County will be an inclusive, engaged, and healthy community supported by a robust arts and cultural ecosystem.

4Culture Implements Doors Open Programs

4Culture's role in advancing the Doors Open Theory of Change is primarily to act as a grant-maker and provider of resources to the constellation of cultural organizations in King County. In turn these cultural organizations create positive impact and benefits for residents and schools. The six programs funded by Doors Open and implemented by 4Culture are Sustained Support, Public School Cultural Access, Public Free Access, Building for Equity, County Connected, and Launch. 4Culture also implements the Network of Support, a resource for organizations in the field.The evaluation will assess the unique objectives of these six programs as well as the total collective public benefit stemming from the enactment of Doors Open.

SUSTAINED SUPPORT

As the core legacy program for 4Culture, Sustained Support aids King County cultural organizations with funding for operational needs so that they are able to provide low-barrier opportunities for community participation in cultural experiences. The purpose of this program is to support a wide range of activities, focusing on the organization's ability to use funds to reach communities and consistently provide cultural opportunities equitably.

PUBLIC SCHOOL CULTURAL ACCESS

The Public School Cultural Access Program provides funding to cultural organizations to expand access to arts and cultural experiences for public school students. It offers King County school districts an online roster of cultural organizations providing on and off-site programs, along with free field trip transportation for districts with over a 40% reduced lunch rate.

PUBLIC FREE ACCESS

The Public Free Access program seeks to eliminate cost barriers, enabling King County residents and visitors to enjoy quality cultural experiences, particularly in underserved communities. This funding opportunity allows local organizations to provide free or reduced cost access to arts, heritage, science, and historic preservation programming.

BUILDING FOR EQUITY

Building for Equity supports historically underserved communities in eliminating barriers to the development of buildings and other capital projects. The Doors Open Legislation has enabled the program to expand, leading to the launch of a new initiative specifically aimed at supporting facility development for Native communities and Native cultural practices.

COUNTY CONNECTED

County Connected supports cultural support service organizations that provide King County cultural practitioners with resources for professional development and job opportunities. The funding supports capacity building by aiding both the development and implementation of cultural support services, while also connecting individual cultural practitioners with a roster of service providers to foster collaborations that enhance cultural opportunities offered in the county.

LAUNCH

The Launch program ensures that all geographic areas and communities in King County have access to cultural experiences by providing grants to new, emerging local arts and cultural organizations for startup costs and multi-year operating support, including capacity building and technical assistance.
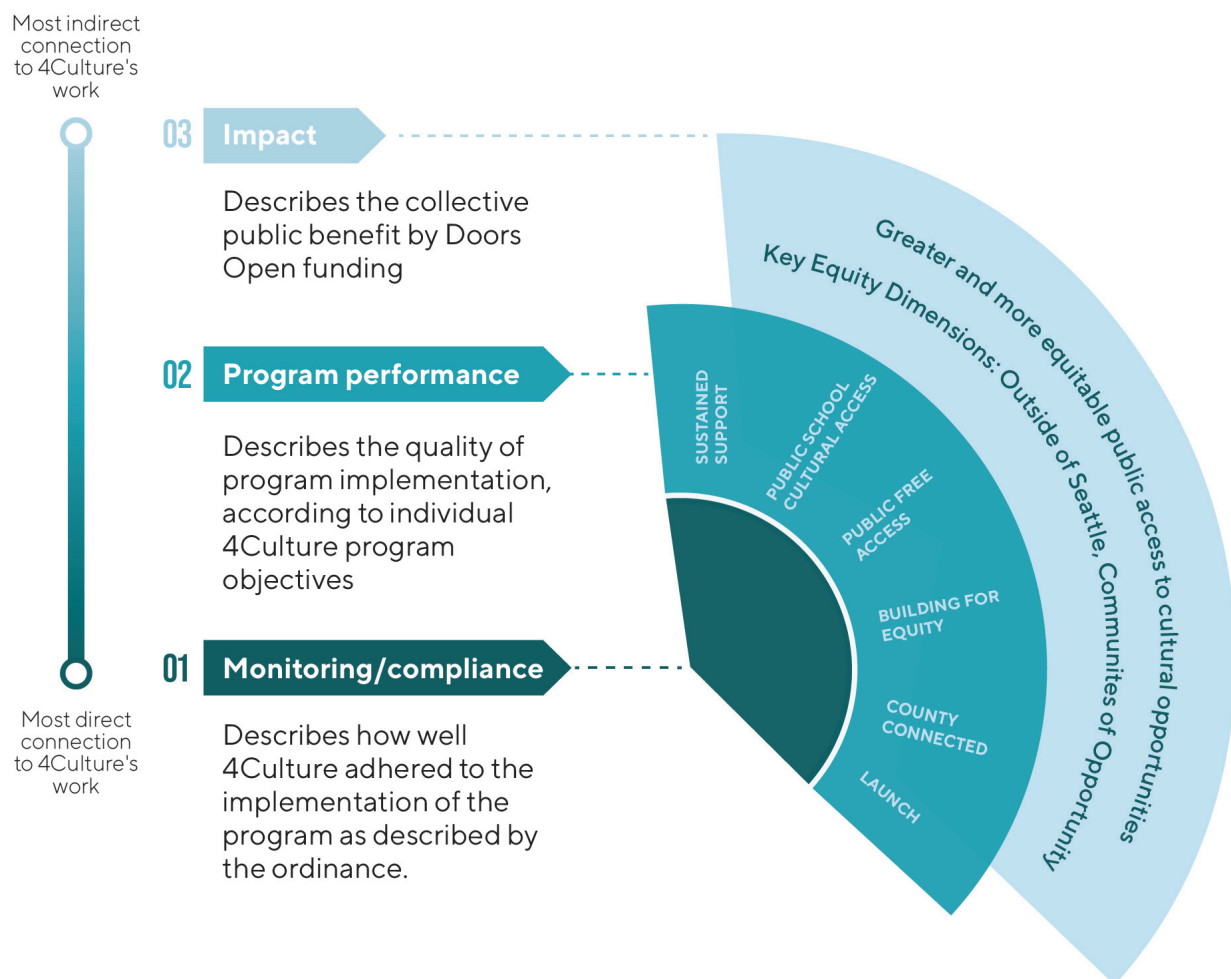
What We Will Measure and How

4CULTURE

The Doors Open Evaluation framework measures the program on three different levels.
Each level is concerned with different kinds of questions and represents a different degree of connection to 4Culture's work .

RAI artisan works on a sewing project, Lake City Maker's Space, 2024. Photo courtesy of Refugee Artisan Initiative.

Most indirect connection to 4Culture's work

03 Impact

Describes the collective public benefit by Doors Open funding

02 Program performance

Describes the quality of program implementation, according to individual 4Culture program objectives

01 Monitoring/compliance

Most direct connection to 4Culture's work

Describes how well 4Culture adhered to the implementation of the program as described by the ordinance.

Greater and more equitable public access to cultural opportunities
Key Equity Dimensions: Outside of Seattle, Communites of Opportunity

SUSTAINED SUPPORT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CULTURAL ACCESS

PUBLIC FREE ACCESS

BUILDING FOR EQUITY

COUNTY CONNECTED

LAUNCH

What We Will Know and When

In accordance with the Doors Open legislation, assessment is required to ensure that program funding and spending are utilized effectively, and that Doors Open programs are accountable to the public. As programs are developed and launched, monitoring and compliance data on the distribution of funds is available first. Typically, program performance data begins to be available a year into implementation.

The final assessment that reviews practices, methodology, personnel, funding distribution, program performance, planned vs actuals, and impact and public benefit will be completed in 2029. An interim assessment will be delivered to the Executive and King County Council every April along with the annual report providing available data according to the timeline described here.

	2025	2026	2027 – 2028	2029
Impact Describes the collective public benefit by Doors Open funding		Baseline data on impact measures ✓		**FULL SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT** Report on all six programs and collective Doors Open Impact.
Program performance Describes the quality of program implementation, according to individual 4Culture program objectives	Data available on 2 programs: – One-Time Capital Grants – One-Time Sustained Support ✓	All Six Programs ✓	All Six Programs ✓	All Six Programs ✓
Monitoring/ compliance Describes how well 4Culture adhered to the implementation of the program as described by the ordinance.	All Six Programs ✓	All Six Programs ✓	All Six Programs ✓	All Six Programs ✓