AUSTIN

UNESCO CITY OF MEDIA ARTS

Monitoring Report 2015 -2019

UNESCO

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

AUSTIN
City of Media Arts

Designated
UNESCO Creative City
in 2015

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1. Executive Summary

In Austin, the creative sector is a vital component of the local economy. As state capital of Texas, with around 965,000 inhabitants, it is a place where small, local businesses thrive and has achieved prominence as a trendsetting global city at the intersection of art, music, and digital technology. Growing by 40% over the last decade, the region's creative sector contributes more than **US$4.35 billion in economic activity** annually, represents nearly **49,000 permanent jobs,** and over **US$71.6 million in local tax revenue.**

With excellent higher education institutions – including the University of Texas – Austin has a reputation as a progressive city and attracts many creative professionals each year, many of whom have made the state famous with their songs, films, artwork, video games, and innovations. With this, events like **SXSW Music, Film and Interactive, Austin City Limits Music Festival and Fantastic Fest** have now become perpetual fixtures in the city's cultural calendar.

From individual artists and creators to non-profit arts and culture organizations, the presence of many talents within Austin has spurred the growth of a rich and diverse cultural ecosystem. As Austin's creative sector continues to expand, its vitality is sustained by the many for-profit creative industries, including music, film, digital entertainment, galleries and festivals found here, as well as by the venues, funders, leadership, and audiences.

Due to its importance, the creative economy has been recognized as a priority in the City's 2012 Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, in which **creative industries and smart grid technology – in particular gaming, digital media, and film – are considered as essential levers to Austin local economy.**

The UNESCO City of Media Arts designation underscores Austin's reputation as a trendsetting global city at the intersection of art, music, and digital technology.
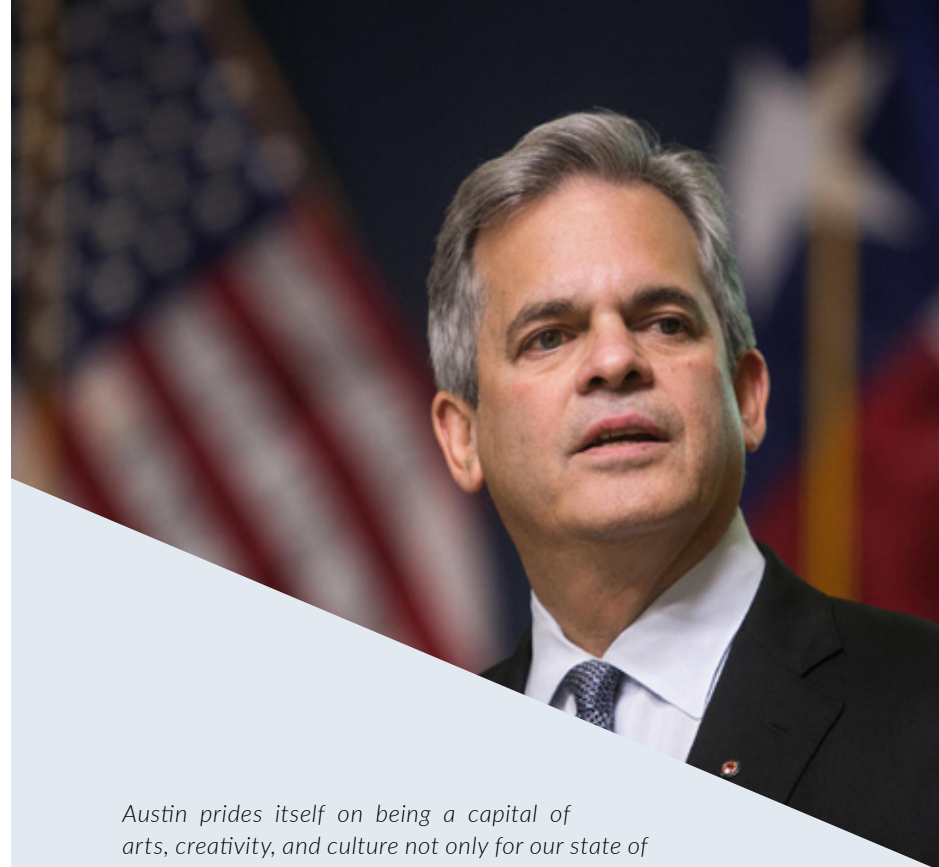
Austin prides itself on being a capital of arts, creativity, and culture not only for our state of Texas, but for the United States and the world.

Austin is a destination for people from around the world seeking a home where the arts, culture, and creativity thrive. In my years as a resident of this great community, and now as the Mayor of Austin, I have seen our creative sector become more vibrant and diverse, eagerly embracing new technologies while also sustaining cultural traditions; and as our city grows, the creative sector grows with it.

In Austin, the creative sector is both a vital component of the local economy and an agent in building community identity and livability. In neighborhoods across Austin, the creative community plays an important role in sustaining our social fabric, cultural diversity, and atmosphere of innovation.

With this designation, we introduce the best of Austin's artists and innovators to a worldwide audience, encouraging exciting new conversations and discoveries.

Mayor Steve Adler

2. General Information

2.1   **Name of City**
Austin

2.2   **Country**
United States of America

2.3   **Creative Field**
Media Arts

2.4   **Date of Designation**
December 11, 2015

2.5   **Date of the Submission of the current report**
December 30, 2019

2.6   **Entity responsible for the report**
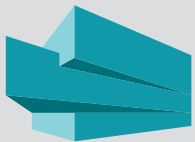Cultural Arts Division, Economic Development Department,
City of Austin

2.7   **Previous reports submitted and dates**   N/A

2.8   **Focal Point of contact**
Laura Odegaard, Sr Project Manager, Cultural Arts Division,
Economic Development Department, City of Austin.
Laura.Odegaard@AustinTexas.gov

Cultural Arts
CITY OF AUSTIN
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

3. Contribution to the Programme's Global Management

3.1 Number of UCCP Annual Conferences attended in the last four years

- Enghien-les-Bains, France: June 201
- Krakow and Katowice, Poland: June 2018
- Fabriano, Italy: June 2019

3.2 Hosting of a previous or future UCCP Annual Conference N/A

3.3 Hosting of working or coordination meetings addressed to one or more UCCP creative field representatives

- Hosted a meeting with UNESCO representatives from Sapporo, Linz, York, and Guadalajara in conjunction with SXSW 2017
- Hosted a meeting with UNESCO representatives in conjunction with SXSW 2018
- North American UNESCO Creative Cities Meeting in conjunction with SXSW 2019 (A closed conversation between the **18 North American UCC coordinators** to explore the potential cooperation projects and the idea of a regional UCCN subnetwork)
- Meeting with Hamamatsu (UNESCO Creative City of Music): March 2019
- Meeting with Karlsruhe to discuss application into the UCCN as a City of Media Arts: March 2019

3.4 Hosting of international conferences or meetings on specific issues salient to the Creative Cities with a large participation of members of the program

South by Southwest's unparalleled mix of industry conferences, festivals and exhibitions attracts the world's creative thought leaders to Austin. The gathering transforms the city into a global mecca for creative professionals

and further reinforces Austin's well-deserved reputation as a community where innovation and commerce are nurtured, networked and celebrated. March 2016 / 2017 / 2018 / 2019.

3.5   Financial and/or in-kind support provided to UNESCO in order to strengthen the sustainability of the UCCP in different areas including management, communication, and visibility

Austin is committed to promoting the title of UNESCO City of Media Arts and to raise public awareness about the UCCN. To that end, a marketing strategy was developed around our designation. First steps were to develop an Austin UNESCO City of Media Arts logo and set up a website. An Austin City of Media Arts promotional video was produced, as well as informational collateral. This piece of marketing collateral had an additional innovative component that included an Augmented Reality experience on the cover. The overall costs were covered by the City of Austin.

Furthermore Austin has established a Steering Committee of local Media Arts experts who meet on a regular basis to coordinate and facilitate communication between member cities of the UCCN, international and local cultural institutions, to inform about ongoing activities and to develop awareness raising activities at local and international level.

We estimate that approximately US$500,000 has been contributed toward UNESCO as in-kind support over the past four years.

3.6   Serving as a cluster coordinator or deputy coordinator and period
N/A

3.7   Participation in the evaluation of previous applications or previous Membership Monitoring Reports (number evaluated per exercise)
• Application evaluation: 2017 (Braga, Changsha); 2019 (Karslruhe)
• Membership Monitoring Report evaluation: 2018 (Sapporo); 2019 (York)

4. Major Initiatives Implemented at the Local and City Level to Achieve the Objectives of the UCCP

4.1 UNESCO Media Arts Steering Committee

Austin's designation as a UNESCO Media Arts city is managed in cooperation between the Cultural Arts Division of the Economic Development Department and a Community Led Steering Committee. The Committee was established in 2017 and meets at least quarterly throughout the year to help guide strategies and media arts activities, such as artist selection for the Annual Media Arts Exhibition at South by Southwest. This partnership highlights Austin's commitment to citizen and cultural participation to support a sustainable creative ecosystem for all.

4.2 Cultural Policy

Austin's creativity fuels the economy by attracting new businesses and residents to our city and remains an integral part of Austin's vitality, livability, and cultural identity. Through ongoing cultural policy research and community reports, the Cultural Arts Division strives to support cultural development in Austin and ensure that Austin's culture of creativity continues to be a significant player in Austin's development. As such, we have written and commissioned several creative development reports around Creative Sector Industry Development (*Music & Creative Ecosystem Stabilization Recommendations, 2016*), Cultural Planning (*Thriving in Place: Supporting Austin's Cultural Vitality Through Place-Based Economic Development, 2018*), Cultural Facilities Development (*CAMP: Cultural Asset Mapping Project, 2017*), and Public Art Plans (*ABIA Airport Public Art Master Plan, 2017*).

Strategic Direction 2023: Based on the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, the Austin City Council adopted a Strategic Direction on March 8, 2018, guiding the City of Austin for the next five years. Austin Strategic Direction 2023 outlines a shared vision stating that strives to create a complete community where every Austinite has choices at every stage of life to experience and contribute to six priority Strategic Outcomes (Economic Opportunity & Affordability; Mobility; Safety; Health & Environment; Culture & Lifelong Learning; Government that Works for All). Culture is an integrated component of Austin's sustainable growth and development.
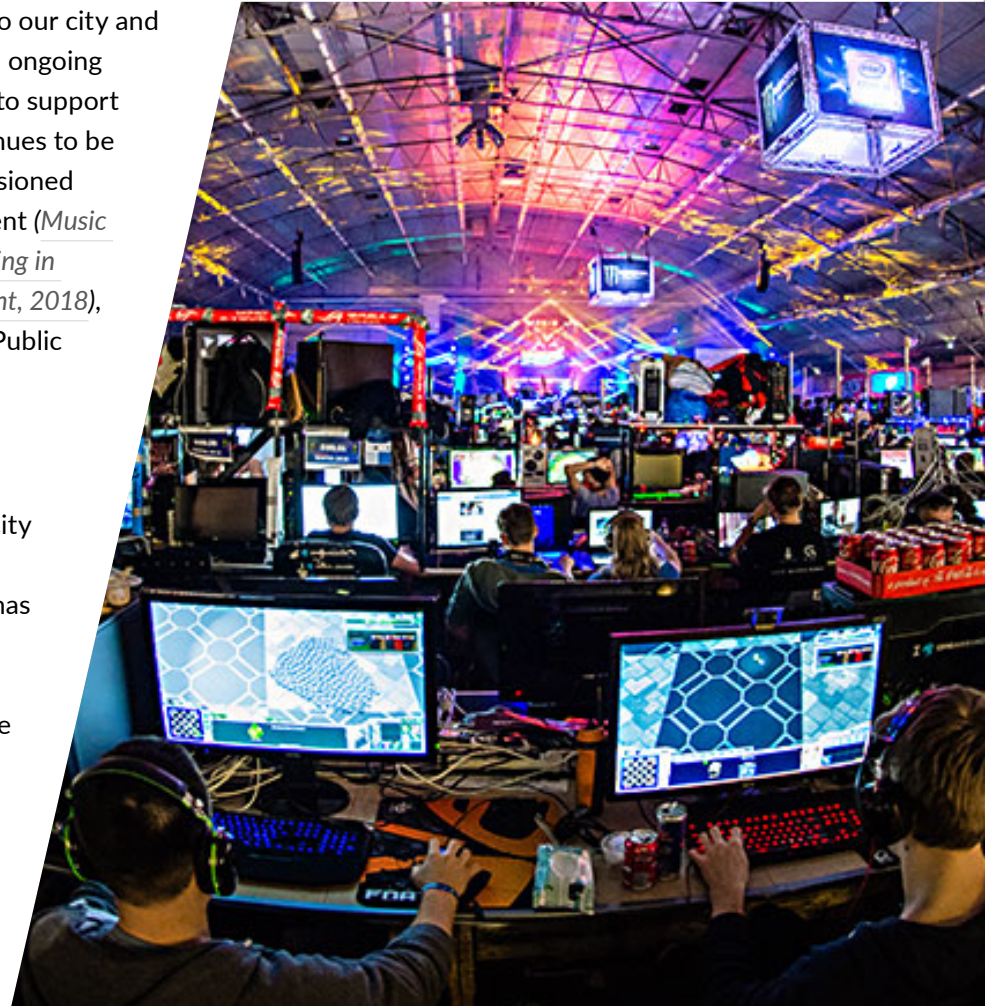
Cultural Tourism Plan: The Cultural Arts Division works with numerous public and private community stakeholders to foster cultural tourism to Austin and to expand patronage of our City's cultural offerings. In 2015, arts consulting firm Public City was contracted to develop a comprehensive cultural tourism strategy. Funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and commissioned by the Cultural Arts Division, Austin's cultural tourism plan is about continuing to build, invest, and provide the conditions that further Austin's capacity to create and share the stories of the people and cultures that define the Austin experience.

The UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts designation supports the following Cultural Tourism plan recommendations:

- Showcase Austin's arts ecosystem to visitors to uncover its rich cultural diversity
- Export Austin: Participate and lead in the global culture and global tourism efforts
- Invest in projects that are developed locally with the potential of global interest
- Leverage the reach of non-profit arts organizations in Austin to help attract visitors

2016 Economic Development Department Target Assessment Market: Austin's recognition as a *"technopolis," "knowledge-economy,"* and *"creative economy"* hasn't come without growing pains, as various groups grapple with a digital divide and retaining livability. The Economic Development Department created a plan that has a strong focus on creating opportunities for a growing economically disadvantaged population; furthermore, the very nature of selecting Target Markets benchmarks the inputs necessary for building a sustainable marketplace, which allows the Department to make prudent and agile decisions when faced with seemingly attractive business development opportunities. The seven Target Markets to strategically position the city for equitable economic development that will secure jobs and investment for all stakeholders while supporting a diverse business climate include: creative sector (music, film and visual media, gaming and digital media, not-for-profit arts groups, visual arts, and culture related tourism), life sciences & technology integration, mobility innovations, fashion, food sector, zero waste, and advanced manufacturing.

4.3   Hotel Occupancy Tax

The City of Austin invests in arts and culture by allocating a portion of Hotel Occupancy Tax revenues to eligible cultural organizations and artists. Austin allocates the maximum allowed by the State of Texas to go toward Cultural Arts (15% of the 9 cent collection = 1.05 cents).

4.3.1 Cultural Funding Program

The majority of the Hotel Occupancy Tax allocated toward Cultural Arts goes to the Cultural Funding Program. Both individual artists and non-profit arts organizations are able to apply to this funding pool. Over the past four years, over US$43,000,000 has gone towards funding Austin-based artists and cultural groups. The awareness of this program and subsequent application rate has increased from 333 approved applications in 2016 to 539 approved applications in 2019. There have been over 1,600 awards granted to artists and arts organizations during the monitoring period. In an effort to keep this program as equitable as possible and aligned with community needs, the City of Austin is currently undergoing a Cultural Funding Review Process with projected changes set to roll out in the next Fiscal Year.

4.3.2 TEMPO

TEMPO is a program that supports emerging Public Artists through a series of public art installations across the City. Both sculptures and murals are displayed city-wide to transform city spaces and catalyze community engagement. Since receiving the UNESCO designation, there have been 61 installations with a total investment of over US$500,000 from the City.

4.3.3 Faces of Austin

In 2016, the City of Austin brought back the Faces of Austin program. This showcases short films by local emerging filmmakers, reflecting the diverse faces, voices, and experiences of our City. Each year, the films selected for Faces of Austin have a premiere screening during the international SXSW Film Festival in March. Additionally, these emerging filmmakers receive SXSW wristbands, a cash honorarium, and screening throughout the year on the City's public access channel. Over the past three years, 42 short films have been selected as part of the program with an investment from the City of US$25,000.

4.3.4 Playable City Austin

Funded in part by a National Endowment for the Arts Art Works grant and in part by Hotel Occupancy Tax, Playable City Austin was a series of public workshops, presentations, and a public art installations that activated neighborhoods. This initiative transcends cultural, economic, and geographic lines by re-using City infrastructure, through technology that encourages play, to create connections – person to person and person to city.

In 2018 Austin commissioned a temporary public art installation of *Shadowing*. Created by artists Jonathan Chomko and Matthew Rosier, Shadowing gives memory to city street lights, enabling them to record and play back the shadows of those who pass underneath them. As the sun sets, and street lights come on, traces of those who have passed below will be captured and projected on the pavement. As one walks under the lights, the shadow of a previous visitor will walk, hop, or dance beside them, and then their own movements will be captured and displayed to the next passerby. During the 6-week run, Shadowing had over 99,000 interactions with visitors and community members.
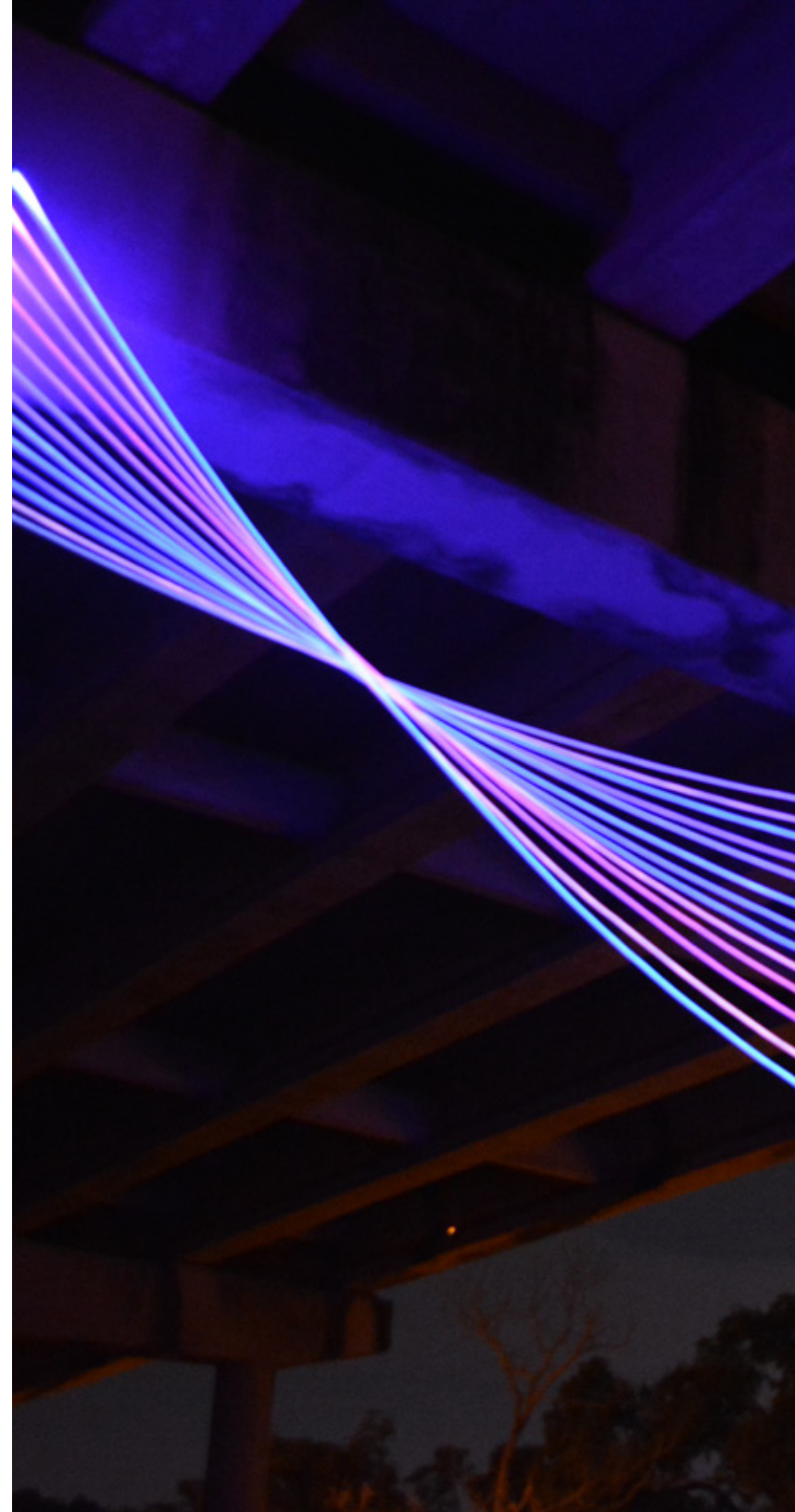
In 2015, the City commissioned *Hello Lamp Post,* a temporary public art project. *Hello Lamp Post: Austin* was a city-wide platform for play that let Austinites talk to the city's infrastructure and share stories using the text messages. By referencing the thousands of pre-existing identifier codes that label items of street furniture across the city, players could talk to particular objects, including (but not limited to) lamp posts, mail boxes, bus stops, manholes, and moontowers. Over the 10-week run, 2,975 individual players sent over 21,000 text messages to over 2,000 unique objects around town.


4.4 Capital Improvement Projects

The City of Austin was the first municipality in Texas to make a commitment to include works of art in construction projects. By ordinance, 2% of eligible capital improvement project budgets are allocated to commission or purchase art for that site. Austin's Public Art Collection is found at sites such as the airport, convention center, libraries, parks, police stations, recreation centers, and streetscapes, enhancing public spaces for all residents and visitors to our City. Over the past four years, the Art in Public Places program has contributed over US$4 million toward 83 artists. Many of these pieces include media arts, such as:

CAW

CAW, by artist Christian Moeller, is a 37-foot-tall kinetic sculpture resembling a gigantic cuckoo clock overtaken by blackbirds. It is accompanied by an LED screen on the fifth level of the library, which features an artist-created mystical black bird set within a Texas landscape. Instead of running on a conventional video loop, the bird's behavior and gestures on screen are controlled by a computer program, with the aid of an external human sensor and remote control kit. Mounted on the six-story wall in the library's atrium, it is dynamic and visually-engaging, enhancing the height and openness of the building's architecture.

Golden Afternoon

Golden Afternoon by Urban Matter Inc. is a responsive public art installation in the parking structure of the Seaholm Redevelopment Project. Inspired by the wildflowers of Texas, the installation mimics a hanging garden that has overgrown from the flower beds on the plaza level, down the open stairwell, making its way into the parking structure. Reminiscent of a trip down the rabbit hole from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, the artwork experience is heightened by lighting which responds to people moving up and down the stairs.
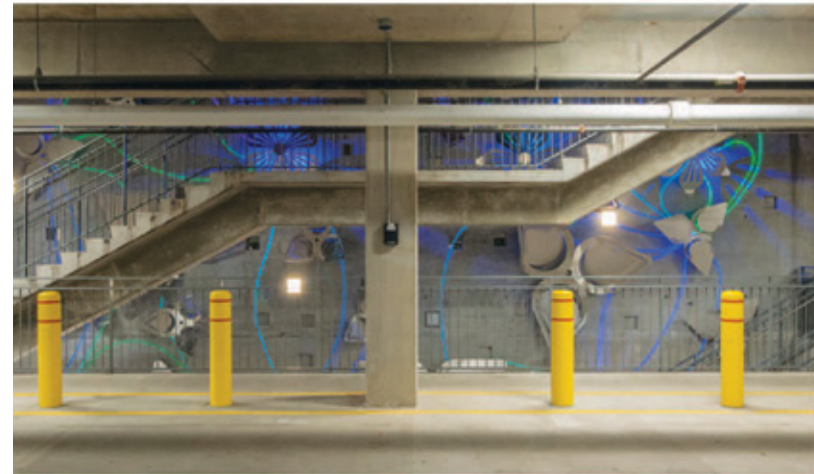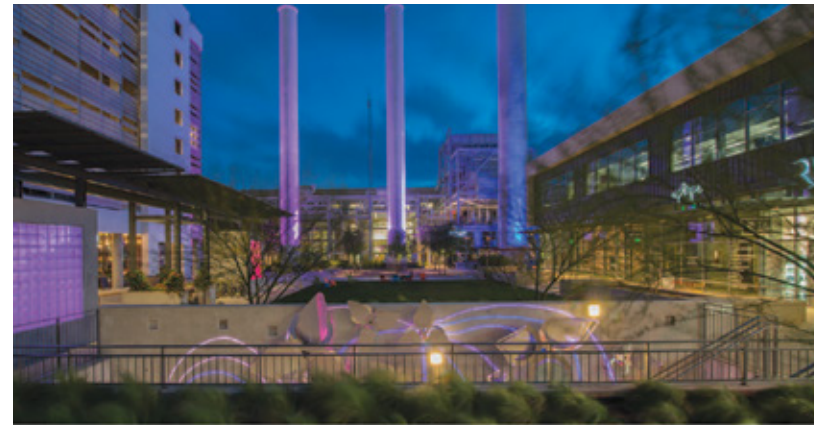
Kempelen's Owls

Inspired by the 18th-century robotics of Wolfgang Von Kempelen, Kempelen's Owls, by New American Public Art, is an interactive sculpture that fosters curiosity. Inspired by the Texas native Great Horned Owl, the sculptures were created from 3D scans of a local owl from the collection at the University of Texas' Texas Memorial Museum. Two owls, each standing 7' tall and constructed of layered metal and composite materials, are perched atop dodecahedrons (12 sided geometric shapes) and silently observe surrounding passersby. The interactive features of the work are hidden, awaiting discovery by visitors who can activate them to trigger movement in the owls. This is the City's first fully open-sourced permanent public artwork, with all of the artists' concepts, designs, contracts and methods made available to the public under a Creative Commons license. This artwork was part of a Master Development agreement between the City and TC Green Master Developer, LLC (Trammell Crow Company) for the redevelopment of the property (including funding for Public Art).

Wander

Created by local artists Chris Gannon, Chadwick Wood, and Brockett Davidson, Wander is an interactive, choose-your-own adventure installation featuring a sculptural beacon and mobile-optimized web app that takes visitors throughout downtown Austin. The artist team worked with local writers and illustrators, developing four separate adventures that an explorer can engage multiple times, seeing different points of interest and creating a new experience each time. The adventure begins in front of the new Central Library at the sculptural starting point known as the Beacon. The Beacon directs the users to a mobile web application or a printed edition to be checked out from the library. Upon selection of one of the four storylines, the user is presented with the first chapter. Each chapter ends with choices which direct the action in the story, prompting the adventurer to physically move to the next location in Austin. The locations include historic sites, public art installations, and the eclectic nooks and crannies within Austin's urban core.

4.5   Innovative City initiatives
Artist in Residence Program

Launched in February 2017, Austin's Artist-in-Residence program was among a pool

Design Process Digital Sculpting

of staff-generated proposals in the City's Idea Accelerator initiative, administered by the Office of Innovation. It embeds an artist into a City department for a set period of time to help resolve problems, provide innovative or new process improvements, and/or engage residents around community issues in creative ways. Rehab El Sadek was selected as the artist-in-residence for the program's inaugural year to work within the Watershed Protection Department for nine months (extended to a little under a year) beginning that May. After a period of research and shadowing, El Sadek created a pop-up exhibition of photographs, text, and 2D artwork for an exhibit that conveyed the important role of Watershed Protection in the lives of Austin citizens.

Electric Drive
Electric Drive is Austin Energy's showcase for electric transportation in Austin's new Seaholm EcoDistrict. Electric Drive is a mobility hub that features bike sharing, car sharing, access the hike-and-bike trail, and charging options for two- and four wheel electric vehicles (EVs). Electric Drive aligns with Austin's Smart Mobility roadmap. It provides the community with faster, better, cheaper transportation options that help cut vehicle emissions.

Tip the Band
Launched in 2019, Tip the Band is an innovative program from the City of Austin Music & Entertainment Division. The goal of the Tip the Band Program is to address the issue of Austin affordability within the musician's community by creating new revenue streams for artists. Through the utilization of a technology-enabled vessel called a DipJar, artists will be provided with the ability to collect digital tips, supported by a marketing campaign executed by the City's Music & Entertainment Division.

Virtual Reality Cave Exploration with Watershed Protection and CTM
The City of Austin Central Technology Management Department and the Watershed Protection Department received a 2019 Best of Texas Award at the Digital Government Summit for their creation of a virtual reality (VR) tour of the Millennium and Wildflower caves. The VR tour has been used at festivals, in classrooms, and on field trips when weather or physical challenges prevented people from entering the caves. The opportunity to experience these caves are no longer limited by time of day, transportation challenges or physical ability. This innovative tool expands the number of community members who can be reached with messages about our role in protecting Austin's groundwater. Start-up funding for this project was provided by the City of Austin's Innovation Office. The tour can be viewed with VR equipment or from any computer or smartphone.

4.6 New Creative Spaces

Central Library

Opening in 2017, Austin's new Central Library is a Platinum LEED Certified building and has a rooftop garden with the largest solar installation in downtown Austin; it is part of the Seaholm EcoDistrict. The Central Library operates 30% more efficiently than the energy code requires, with energy savings equivalent to the needs of 130 households per year. The Central Library provides knowledge, technology, and inspiration to the Austin community. It includes 'Recycled Reads', a hub that receives all of the library's discarded books and materials – as well as donations from the public – which are then sold, recycled or repurposed with all proceeds supporting the library. This state of the art building is designed to adapt to new technology and the needs of future generations, including 150 self-check portable devices (Macbooks, iPads, HP Tablets, etc) and a Tech Petting Zoo where visitors can engage with Virtual Reality devices and 3D printers.

Creative Media Center at Austin Studios

Opening in December 2019 is the Creative Media Center at Austin Studios. The project is a result of a partnership between Austin Film Society and the City of Austin, who provided US$5.4 million in 2012 Bond Funds for design and initial construction. The LEED-Certified Creative Media Center is an adapted former Armory building featuring 38,500 square feet of office space, meeting rooms, screening facilities, and production space.

Austin Studios has been a key infrastructure component for the film, television and media industry in Austin since 2000. It is home to Richard Linklater's Detour Film production, Chapman Leonard Studio Equipment Inc., Rooster Teeth, MPS Camera & Lighting, the casting agencies of Beth Sepko and Vicky Boone, and others. Part of this new Creative Media Center includes artist Eric Eley's large-scale homage to the film camera lens, Split Diopter.

"The city of Austin has proven itself a visionary partner to the film industry," said Richard Linklater, AFS founder and artistic director. *"They entrusted Austin Film Society to create this facility 20 years ago, helped us transform airplane hangars into soundstages in 2006, and worked with us to create a building that will provide essential space for independent filmmakers and small businesses."* (Sightlines, November 19, 2019)

Innovative Community Working Spaces

dadalab opened in 2019 as a flexible office and exhibit space for people working at the intersection of art, design, and technology. The flagship organization housed in this space is dadageek, a school for creative code and expressive technology that unites code, hardware, art, and design.

Motion Media Arts Center launched their 20,000 square foot Cinemaker Space in 2016, which is Austin's first and only nonprofit co-working space and membership program. Their vision is that *"film, art, and technology can be and are financially accessible art forms both in and outside of the classroom."*

4.7   *Partnerships*

Unseen Ballet

In December 2019, Dell Technologies partnered with Ballet Austin and eSight to create the Unseen Ballet, a Nutcracker performance where audience members of all ages with little to no eyesight could see the show through their own eyes, using glasses equipped with camera technology that creates a clearer, real-time image for the viewer. *"The intersection of technology and arts is an unbelievable connection that can-do amazing things for the world."* -Liz Matthews, Senior Vice President of Global Brand at Dell

3D Printed housing for the Homeless

A great example of innovative technology, creative industries, and social services working together to deliver real-world solutions is ICON, an Austin start-up specializing in industrial scale 3D printers. ICON partnered with the nonprofit Mobile Loaves & Fishes to create 3D printed buildings for the Community First! Village (a project that helps provide housing for people coming out of chronic homelessness). Community First! Village is expanding to 51 acres and will be home to 480 formerly homeless people in the Austin area. *"We're proud to deliver buildings like this to Community First!, and I think all of Austin can be proud that two local, home-grown ventures are working on these issues together in such an innovative way."* –ICON CEO Jason Ballard

One Water

The One Water Summit 2019, was hosted in Austin in September 2019, and included an arts and culture track throughout the Summit. One Water isn't just about breaking down the silos in the water sector—it's about re-conceptualizing water management in an inclusive and innovative way. Arts and culture can be essential tools to address water challenges. The focus on arts and culture drew from the report Advancing One Water through Arts and Culture: A Blueprint for Action, a collaboration between US Water Alliance and ArtPlace America.

[Re]Verse Pitch

[Re]Verse Pitch is an event series for Social Entrepreneurs encouraging principles of the circular economy. The [Re]Verse Pitch Competition helps turn valuable raw materials that are currently leaving local organizations as waste into the raw materials for new or expanding social enterprises. 2019 winners were 'Polymart', by Anjali Sridharan, who repurposed polycarbonate plastic die-cut sheets into eyewear; and '3D Printing from Trash' by re:3D, repurposing polycarbonate plastic die-cut sheets into 3D printed furniture, art, and other items.

5. Major Initiatives Implemented through Inter-City and International Cooperation to Achieve the Objectives of the UCCP

5.1 SXSW UNESCO Media Arts Exhibition + Panel

"SXSW is a quintessential Austin story. Starting as a music festival, then expanding to include film and evolving further to cover interactive technology, as well as education and gaming, SXSW has become the world's fair of the future. The economic impact of SXSW is on par with hosting the Super Bowl every year, and all participants benefit year round."
- Mayor Steve Adler

Since 2018, the City of Austin has partnered with the SXSW Art Program to host a special UNESCO Media Arts Showcase during the Conference + Festival. This partnership invests in local artists (allowing them to show their work to a global audience, connect to new business opportunities and revenue generation), gives international artists an opportunity to experience Austin's creative community, and exposes the general public to a diverse blend of cutting edge digital art.

In 2018 there was a mini-exhibition of 5 local Media Arts pieces during the City Summit of SXSW and companion Panel. The panel, *The Case for Culture: Art & Tech in UNESCO Creative Cities* brought together representatives from other UNESCO Creative Cities of Media Arts to have a discussion and share knowledge about how each city is using their designation to integrate culture into local and international urban projects. Patrick Bartos from Linz Austria, Natsumi Ohara from Sapporo Japan, Meghan Wells from Austin, and artist Kevin Reilly were on the panel. 2018 SXSW had over 270,000 total attendees, and at least 1,000 viewed the UNESCO Media Arts Exhibition.

In 2019, the City of Austin expanded the UNESCO Media Arts Showcase to include both local Austin Media Artists and opened the call for all the UCCN Media Arts cities. There were nine groups selected for the exhibition—six from Austin, one group from Lyon, one group from Guadalajara, and one group from Linz. It was hosted in the 3000 square foot gallery of the award-winning Austin Central Library, and highlighted the multidisciplinary innovation of media arts artists from around the globe. A companion panel on *UNESCO Creative Cities Network: Fostering a Strong Future for Digital Artmaking*

highlighted the role of the UCCN in implementing initiatives and best practices that support and promote digital art making around the world. 2019 SXSW had over 280,000 people in attendance, and over 8,000 visited the UNESCO Media Arts Exhibition. **SXSW's 2019 economic impact on the Austin economy totaled US$355.9 million. 26% of total attendees were from 105 countries outside of the United States.**

5.2   ATX+

The City of Austin has two running cultural and entrepreneurial exchange programs with Egypt and Pakistan. Goals of this program are to help top performing startups expand into the U.S. market via Austin, TX; open economic growth opportunities for Austin based companies to engage with international businesses and potential customers; and make Austin visible and instill its image as an emerging international City and Startup Hub.

5.2.1. ATX+EGY: Launch

Cairo, Egypt: UNESCO Creative City of Craft and Folk Art
Creative industries exchange (Fashion Industry & Textile; Art, Music and Film; Gaming, AR/VR; Circular Economy)

Egypt is a well-known emerging market, recent activity has resulted in creating a center of creativity and entrepreneurship in the heart of Cairo. The City of Austin was awarded a grant from the US Embassy in Cairo to develop and implement a program, titled ATX+EGY: Launch, to help flourishing creative entrepreneurs expand international and increase global trade. ATX+EGY: Launch is a robust program; as part of the programming, the City of Austin took a delegation of Austin based creative businesses to Cairo to attend the annual Rise Up conference (December 2019).

5.2.2. ATX+PAK: Advance

Lahore, Pakistan: UNESCO Creative City of Literature *(new!)*
Creative industries exchange (Fashion Industry, Textiles, Global trade, Sustainable fashion)

Lahore is home to a robust startup ecosystem and continuing to grow as central location for textiles and fashion. The City of Austin was awarded a grant from the US Embassy in Islamabad to develop and implement a program, titled ATX+PAK: Advance, to help flourishing creative entrepreneurs expand international and increase global trade. ATX+PAK: Advance is the second iteration of Austin programming in Pakistan; as part of the programming, the City of Austin took a delegation of Austin based fashion businesses and designers to Lahore to explore economic growth opportunities in the fashion industry (November 2019).

5.3. Participation in International Exhibitions

- Artist Clay Oldom represented Austin at the UNESCO Data City Exhibit in Enghien-les-Bains, France in July 2017 part of an international exhibition seen by over 500 people (including 250 delegates of the 116 UNESCO Creative Cities from 54 countries)
- Austin representatives, including artist Kevin Reilly, of Vurv Collective, attended Gwangju, South Korea Cultural Foundation Artist Exchange Exhibition in December 2017
- Austin representatives visited Changsha, China to learn more about the Changsha Creativity and Media Arts Week in conjunction with the International Youth Forum: Creativity and Heritage along the Silk Road in April 2017
- Austin representatives, including artist Jacob Villanueva attended the Changsha China Media Arts Festival in 2018

5.4 MOUs signed between cities

Media Arts Cluster Cities (August 2018) | All Member cities from the Media Arts Category of the UCCN

o Commitment to reinforce the creation, production, distribution, and dissemination of cultural activities, goods, and services to develop hubs of creativity and innovation, and to broaden opportunities for creators and professionals of the cultural sector.

Changsha, China (May 15, 2019) | Changsha, UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts

o Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Cooperation between the Member Cities of the Media Arts Category of UNESCO Creative Cities Network signed by Cities of Media Arts of UNESCO CCN, for the purpose of deepening understanding and friendship between the two peoples and developing friendly cooperation, agree to establish a cooperative relationship in technological development and cultural innovation.

Shanghai (July 11, 2016) | Shanghai, UNESCO Creative City of Design

o Shanghai Academy of Science and Technology and Shanghai Industrial Technology Institute *"international understanding, opportunities of exploring markets for enterprises and professional opportunities for academic staff and cooperation with their research partners and industries would be enhanced by an international academic as well as science and technology cooperation agreement"*

Suzhou (July 10, 2016) | Suzhou, UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art

o Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of Friendship City Relationship

5.5 Inter-City Participation

5.5.1. U.S. UNESCO Creative Cities

Austin has participated in several U.S. UNESCO Creative Cities meetings, both in person and on group calls. The most recent was a three-day meeting in December 2019, hosted by San Antonio (UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy). Representatives from Austin also attended the 2017 UNESCO Creative Cities of Crafts & Folk Art Annual Meeting in Paducah, Kentucky (September 2017).

5.5.2. Media Arts Cluster Cities

Austin has been an active participant in all UCCN activities within the Media Arts Cluster. These include the creation of a *"Creative Cities of Media Arts"* promotional video in 2019: https://vimeo.com/332918621 (led by Tel Aviv); a video mapping project presented at the 2019 Annual Meeting in Fabriano that had over 16,000 viewers (led by Enghein-les-Bains); and joint website that is currently under development (led by Guadalajara). Austin has also participated in sub-network cluster meetings when possible (most recently for the meeting hosted by Braga, Portugal in October 2019 via Skype).

6. Proposed Action Plan for the Forthcoming Mid-Term Period of Four Years

6.1 Presentation of a maximum of three main initiatives, programs, or projects aimed at achieving the objectives of the Program *locally* (highlighting expected outcomes and impacts)

6.1.1. Austin Media Arts Roster

A priority for the City of Austin in the next four-years is to establish a working roster of local Media Arts artists, venues, and art works. This would assist in strengthening the goals of the network because Austin would be more prepared to quickly respond to international calls and opportunities for creative exchange with the other UNESCO Creative Cities to a core group of media artists within the city.

6.1.2. Partnership with the Historic French Legation

The French Legation is a historic building in Austin, built in 1841 to house diplomats from France in the new Republic of Texas. Currently undergoing renovations, this building is on the National Register of Historic Places. Conversations have begun between the Texas Historical Commission and the City of Austin about activating the space when it reopens through an Artist-in-Residence program and/or a collaborative media arts project between local artists and those from the two Media Arts Creative Cities in France (Lyon and Enghien-les-Bains).

6.1.3. Interimaginary Departures at the Austin Bergstrom International Airport

Artist Janet Zweig will be creating a site-specific, immersive art experience at the Austin International Airport that utilizes interactive media technology. In *Interimaginary Departures*, a fictional hold room has been inserted at a 7-degree angle into an existing hold room. It appears that flights leave this hold area bound for fictional locations found in literature, film, and other media. Visitors can receive a boarding pass by way of a touchscreen kiosk, search flights departing for fictional locations from flight information display panels, and hear original atmospheric music and amusing boarding announcements for upcoming flights. The artwork will affect every inch of the available space—the walls, carpet, ceiling, and furniture. The goal is to create an airport-specific experience that utilizes technology and underscores Austin's eccentric, playful spirit.

6.2   Presentation of a maximum of three main initiatives, programs, or projects aimed at achieving the objectives of the Program on an **international** level (particularly those involving other member cities)

6.2.1   SXSW Art Program

Austin will continue to host a UNESCO Media Arts Exhibition as an official partner event during South by Southwest. There will be a call every year for participation by the other Media Arts cities within the UNESCO Creative City Network. When appropriate, there will be a Panel associated with the exhibit. Selected artists will continue to receive a stipend for their artwork as well as a Badge to the South by Southwest Conference and Festival.

6.2.2   *Meanwhile*

The Media Arts Cluster is developing an Artist-in-Residency program and Exhibit, tentatively called *Meanwhile.* The Media Arts Cities hope to embed a selected artist from each city into one of the other cities for a period of time. The artists will then create a work from their residency that can be accessed digitally through a QR code on a postcard of the City. In addition to the cultural exchange and cooperation innate in this project, each City within the Cluster can have an exhibit of all 16 Media Arts Cities simultaneously. This project will tentatively be launched during the Annual Meeting in Santos, Brazil. The ultimate goal will be to include all cities within the UCCN, not just the Media Arts cluster.

6.2.3   Mexican Consulate Exhibition

The City of Austin has begun conversations with the Mexican Consulate about collaborative Exhibition between Austin artists and artists from the six Mexican UNESCO Creative Cities. This could be done in partnership during South by Southwest or a different time of year to activate the gallery space within the Mexican Consulate that is next to the Cultural Arts Division of the City.

6.3   Estimated annual budget for implementing the proposed action plan

There will continue to be a line item in the City's budget for the UNESCO Creative Cities designation of around US$20,000 annually. The SXSW Art

Program partnership includes badges for each artist selected (value of US$1,600 each x 4 years x 10 artists = US$64,000 value). There will also be support of the Media Arts Designation through the Art in Public Places program (Capital Improvement Projects), the Cultural Funding Program (Hotel Occupancy Tax), and our U.S. State Department grants to support the ATX+ program in Egypt and Pakistan.

6.4   Plan for communication and awareness

Austin will continue the promotion of UCCN membership at every presentation and event related to Media Arts and the Creative Industries. Austin plans to strengthen communications of the City's designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Media arts through several ways.

The UNESCO Steering Committee will be hiring a Social Media Manager to increase awareness over the next six months.

Austin will expand our 2020 SXSW UNESCO Media Arts Exhibition into an Exhibition + Showcase of local Media Arts artists and groups in addition to the international installations (to include groups such as the University of Texas School of Design and Creative Technologies). The goal of the Showcase will be to increase awareness to the local community about our designation, create a roster of local Media Artists interested in international activities, grow the size and variety of participants in the Steering Committee, and open funding channels from technology companies for future partnerships.

There will be training for all artists and organizations that are part of the Austin Media Arts Roster to include key messaging of both the UCCN and the City. This idea came from a best practices meeting with other US UNESCO Creative Cities as a way to train ambassadors for the City and Network.

All cultural partners will use the **"Austin – UNESCO City of Media Arts"** logo for the promotion of their activities and initiatives to raise awareness.

Strengthen the UCCN awareness through the U.S. as part of a National strategy with the other U.S. UNESCO Creative Cities (i.e. meet with the new Ambassador to the UN, write a joint letter to the National Endowment to the Arts, write a joint letter to the Americans for the Arts, and create a research project about the economic impacts of being a UNESCO Creative City in the U.S.).

The City will work with Visit Austin (Austin's Convention and Visitors Bureau) to track data around awareness of the UNESCO Creative Cities designation. The Cultural Arts Division will meet with the Global Business Expansion Division, Chambers of Commerce, Executive staff, and City Council to share information about and the impact of our UNESCO Creative Cities designation.

There will also be active participation in and promotion of the new UCCN Media Arts website being developed by the cluster (led by Guadalajara).
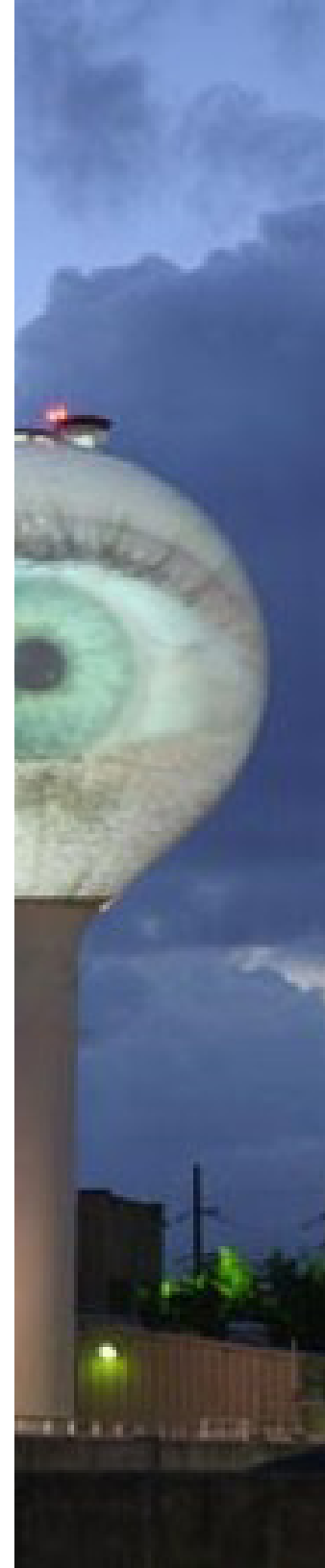
Contribution to the advancement of the following UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals:

4.   Quality Education
6.   Clean Water and Sanitation
7.   Affordable and Clean Energy
8.   Decent Work and Economic Growth
9.   Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
10.   Reduced Inequalities
11.   Sustainable Cities and Communities
12.   Responsible Consumption and Production
13.   Climate Action
16.   Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
17.   Partnerships for the Goal

Appendix

Video Documentation

Austin UNESCO City of Media Arts: https://youtu.be/mAWNilijqfU

Shadowing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miQ_qhAicko&feature=youtu.be

Hello Lamp Post: https://vimeo.com/116875615

ATX + PAK Grant Program: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNYlKEK90Wc

Central Library: https://youtu.be/g9FLpTJwzN0

[Re]Verse Pitch Competition: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=51&v=POmd28-HYzI&feature=emb_title

Artist in Residence Program: https://youtu.be/fT6lTipsuFA?t=193

Tip the Band: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ead-bISnPf8

Austin Energy Electric Drive: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=WZbrJ_qhNFk&feature=emb_logo

Tempo Refresh, *Data Tells a Story* **by Laurie Frick**: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lANKXI5hJXQ&t=1s

Blue Lapis Light Belonging: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39hwh0plKHg

Community First + ICON 3D Printing for the Homeless in Austin: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=is2UVodNphY&feature=emb_title

Dell + Ballet Austin: https://cbsaustin.com/news/local/dell-partners-with-ballet-austin-esight-to-show-nutcracker-to-the-visually-impaired?jwsource=cl