

# INTERIM INCUBATOR OPERATOR OF THE SCHOOL OF ARTS & CULTURE AT THE MEXICAN HERITAGE PLAZA

## BACKGROUND

At its meeting on February 1, 2011, the Mexican Heritage Plaza Steering Committee discussed the possibility of selecting an Interim Incubator Operator (IIO) to provide a bridge, for a period of 18 months to three years, to an eventual permanent operator for the vision of creating a school of arts and culture at the Plaza. This discussion resulted in direction to City staff and the Financial Modeling Team to develop a description of the role of the IIO.

The Committee wanted to develop consensus on this role as a way to understand better how an IIO could assist in the development of a business plan, begin to “beta test” the operation of a school, and develop the permanent leadership of the school. One possible organization (1stACT Silicon Valley) was suggested as a possible candidate, but the Committee agreed that any discussion of selecting an IIO must be based on a thorough understanding of the role and the capabilities needed to be successful.

The recommended elements of that role are listed below, divided into operational and planning/incubation functions, followed by a listing of core qualities and capabilities that will be needed in the organization ultimately selected to fill the IIO role.

## **KEY OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS:**

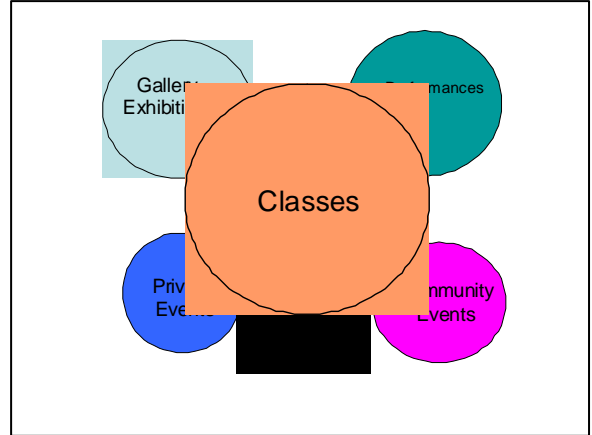
- Operate the Plaza as a community school of arts and culture, based on the conceptual model (*see figure*) established by the Steering Committee.
- Identify partner organizations, based on the existing Cultural Arts Partner model, who can provide programming at the Plaza that is consistent with the conceptual model and the programming Guiding Principles that have been preliminarily adopted by the Steering Committee and are subject to continuing revision by the Prototyping team (*see below*).
- Design classes, events, and other programming based on the Guiding Principles.
- Develop and manage a practicable, near-term operating budget.
- Solicit and receive both earned and contributed income (from private sources as well as the City) during the interim operational period.
- Work in partnership with the City in its role as owner of the facility.

## KEY PLANNING & INCUBATION FUNCTIONS:

- In partnership with the MHP Steering Committee, develop a sustainable business plan that includes viable operating budgets which delineate planned earned and contributed income as well as expenditures. This plan must be presented to the City Council for approval in May 2011. The plan must be specific enough to be executable, but flexible enough to allow a permanent operator to be able to shape it based on its own strategic vision.
- Develop a Governance Model that provides sound leadership for the school and clear accountability to the community.
- Develop a Marketing Plan that will attract customers and investors to the school.
- Develop an expanded Program Model based on the principles described in the Key Operational Functions section, and builds on the lessons learned during the incubation period.
- Develop a multi-stage Organizational Model for staff and faculty that will provide the framework needed to successfully achieve the vision.
- Identify, mentor, and develop the key leaders and staff of the permanent operator, with an emphasis on developing Latino leadership, and position them to execute a seamless transition from the IIO to the permanent operator.

## CORE QUALITIES & CAPABILITIES:

- The IIO must embrace the vision for MHP which was developed by the Steering Committee and unanimously approved by the City Council: to create an accessible, high-quality, community school program in arts and culture.
- The IIO must have the cultural competency, connections to the community, and capability to collaborate with a diverse group of partners in executing a program that reflects the MHP Guiding Principles adopted by the Steering Committee (see below).
- The IIO must have no financial stake or other conflicts of interest in the outcomes of MHP's organizational and operational development.
- The IIO must have the organizational capacity to provide the necessary leadership, administrative support, financial management and fundraising ability to create the conditions for effective transition and future success.
- The IIO must have the ability to identify the future leaders and staff of the permanent school operator, with an emphasis on identifying Latino leadership,



the expertise to develop their capabilities in those roles, and the understanding that its role is to provide a bridge to the time when a permanent operator can take control, not to become the permanent operator itself.

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## THE MHP GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Unanimously Adopted by the MHP Steering Committee, 2/1/11

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The new community school for arts and culture program at Mexican Heritage Plaza will reflect these important Guiding Principles:

- To serve a diverse population of the San José region with a special emphasis on programming that supports the successful accomplishment of developmental milestones for youth and personal growth for adults with a focus on self-esteem and cultural identity
- To promote inclusiveness regardless of social, gender, age, economic, racial, ethnic or language differences
- To provide high quality arts instruction and experience in Mexican arts and those of its Diaspora including contemporary, traditional and “root” forms
- To integrate the learning of art-making skills with an introduction to art history including the social and political context of the art forms
- To inspire all students to reach to their fullest creative potential and provide them with the skills to do so
- To develop artists into leaders and promote self-awareness of their role and understanding of the importance of artists as citizens in society