Inspiration Book: Arts and Experiential Learning

Building the Foundation for Arts and Experiential Learning Partnerships for Mitigation and Resilience

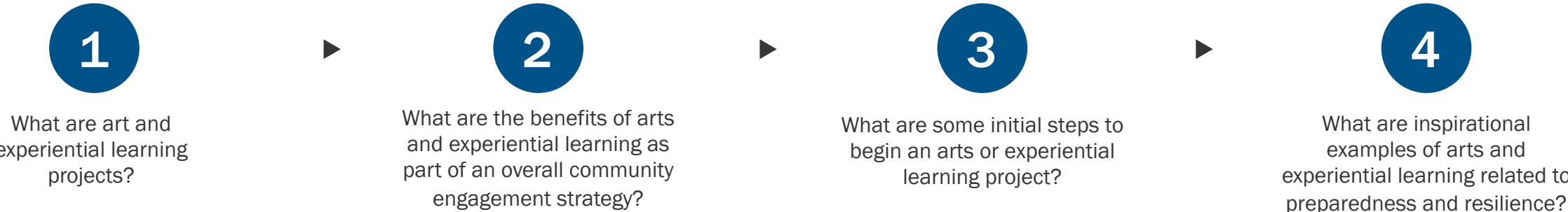# How to Use This Resource
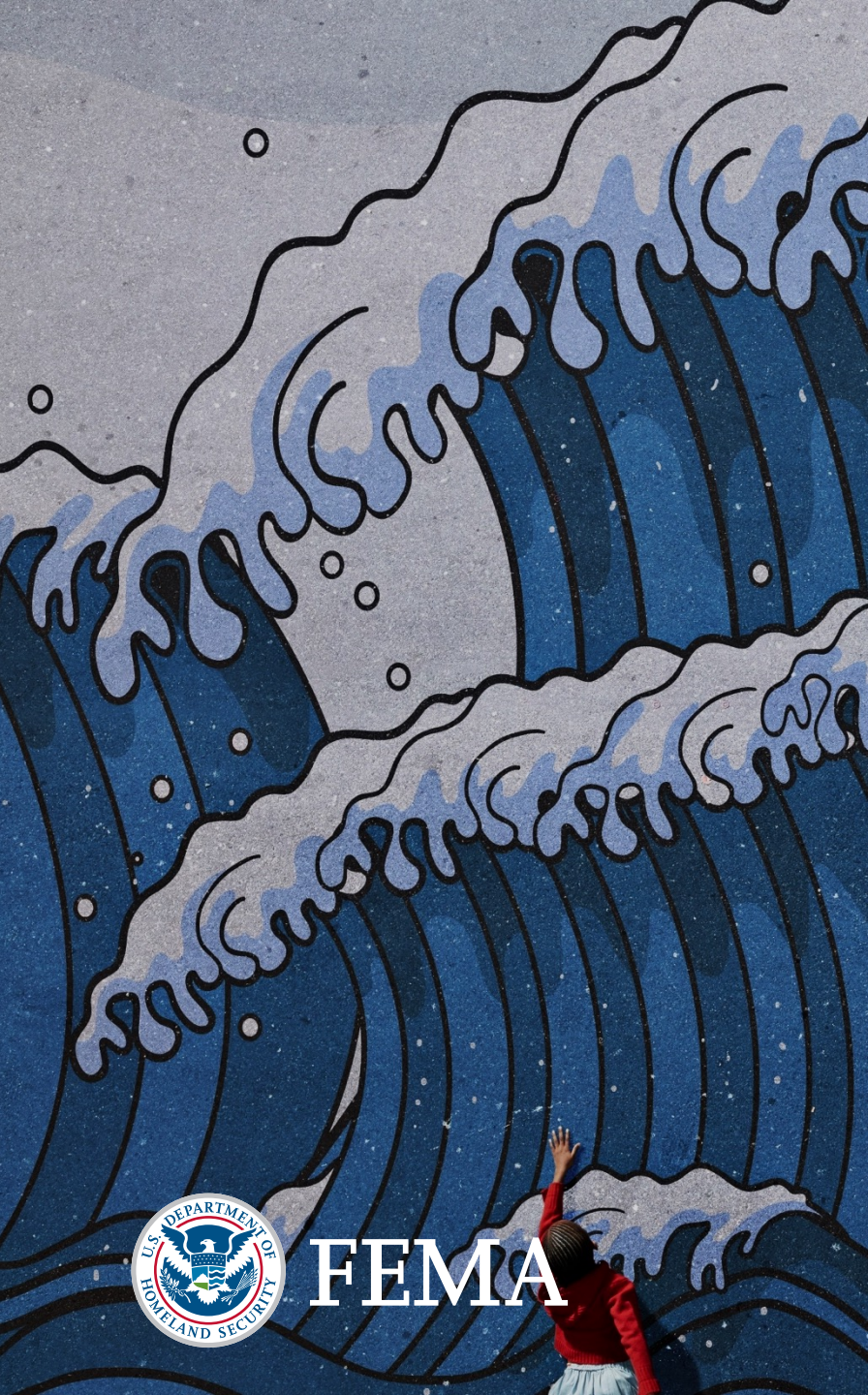
This Inspiration Book is a resource for FEMA, partners and communities to begin discussions around building resilience through Arts and Experiential Learning.

This book includes key considerations for starting a project and inspiring examples of projects from around the world.

The Inspiration Book seeks to answer the following questions:

1 ▶ **2** ▶ **3** ▶ **4**

What are art and experiential learning projects?

What are the benefits of arts and experiential learning as part of an overall community engagement strategy?

What are some initial steps to begin an arts or experiential learning project?

What are inspirational examples of arts and experiential learning related to preparedness and resilience?

FEMA

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Overview:
Arts and Experiential Learning

Image Credit: Superkilen Park, Copenhagen, Denmark; Getty Images

Art and experiential learning tap into **sights, sounds, motions** and **emotions.**

They enable us to use **community identity** and **culture** to **ignite change** in ways data alone cannot.

1

Making the Connection: Arts and Resilient Communities

"Can you use the words "art" and "hazard mitigation" in the same sentence? Yes, you can! These words are not often connected, but a meaningful and powerful relationship does exist between art and hazard mitigation."

"Art is all around us—in murals, sculpture, literature and music. It has the power to spark conversations, build risk awareness, grow a community's intuitive understanding of place, and boost civic pride that can strengthen resilience-building efforts. Art can resonate deeply with people, bonding communities and inspiring civic creativity around many things, including mitigation that could otherwise be difficult to initiate."

"Ultimately, resilient communities are connected communities; arts and culture stakeholders, in creating a sense of place and belonging, can bring people together, strengthen their bonds, and help them connect and protect each other before (and after) a disaster."

FEMA Guide to Expanding Mitigation: Connecting Mitigation and Arts and Culture

What are Arts and Experiential Learning?

Art encompasses a broad array of expressions including visual, auditory, experiential, interactive and/or other sensory installations. Art speaks to personal, family, community and cultural values.

Experiential learning places people in real-life situations or uses simulations to create memorable experiences. Experiential learning engages people in a tangible way.

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Building a Culture of Preparedness and Resilience

Arts and experiential learning can help communities understand risk and build a culture of preparedness and resilience.

Experiential learning and art are two approaches that can help deliver unique and innovative experiences in unexpected ways. These experiences create opportunities to connect with people beyond an initial encounter. They can turn risk awareness into a memorable moment.

Arts and experiential learning help advance FEMA's mission of building a culture of preparedness by engaging and empowering communities. They also help communities move from awareness of risk to mitigation action.

Moving from Awareness to Action

| Awareness |
| Belief |
| Value |
| Ability |
| Action |

Driving Equity and Increasing Accessibility

Arts and experiential learning can drive equitable engagement and increase accessibility to resilience messaging.

Arts and experiential learning allow FEMA and partners to engage with communities in non-technical, direct and inclusive ways. They make risk and mitigation information more accessible to broader audiences.

Arts and experiential learning demonstrate FEMA's core values of compassion, fairness, integrity and respect. These types of engagement can reach community members from diverse backgrounds, because they transcend cultural, linguistic and even perceived barriers. They provide new and impactful ways of communicating.

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Driving Equity and Increasing Accessibility

Arts and experiential learning can be designed to serve whole communities for effective and inclusive engagement. Key equity and accessibility considerations for a potential project may include:

Location
Is the event, experience, or exhibit in a location that reaches historically marginalized and under-represented groups or is focused on reaching a more inclusive audience?

Accessibility
Is the event, experience, or exhibit able to be accessed or attended by as many people as possible? Is it ADA-compliant, culturally sensitive, etc.?

Representation
Does the event, experience, or exhibit (or the artists and organizers involved) represent specific or broader audiences from different cultures, ethnicities, races, genders, sexual orientations, religions, ages, etc.?

Focus
Is a focus on equity at the core of the creation and/or experience of the art, exhibit, event or experience? If so, how?

Identity
What races, gender(s), and other expressed aspects of the artist(s) or organizer(s) identity help to contribute to more equitable representation?

Funding
How equitably are artists funded, reimbursed and/or supported?

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Learning Objectives

Arts and Experiential Learning projects can have one or more of the following objectives:

Raising Awareness	Sharing Knowledge	Creating a Sense of Place	Connecting the Community
Promoting Action	Reinforcing Behaviors	Engaging Partners	Optimizing Funding

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2 **Getting Started**

Getting Started

The suggested steps and ideas in this section support initial collaboration and are intended to prompt further discussion and exploration.

Early in the process to develop an arts or experiential learning project, FEMA, partners, and communities should work together to co-create goals and priorities. These initial discussions should include how a project could support an overall engagement strategy and lay the foundation to discuss specific arts or experiential learning approaches.

Working together, FEMA and partners can advance arts and experiential learning projects on a local, regional and/or national scale.
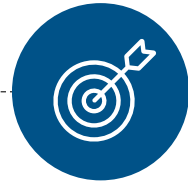
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Six Steps to Get Started

1 | **REVIEW** recommended resources

2 | **IDENTIFY** opportunities to build resilience in your community
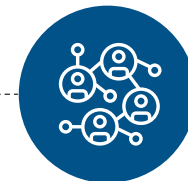
3 | **IDENTIFY** potential arts and experiential learning partners

4 | **ENGAGE** and convene potential partners

5 | **CO-CREATE** goals and measures of success

**6** | **COLLABORATIVELY DEVELOP** project requirements

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Step 1: Review Recommended Resources

These FEMA resources provide a helpful foundation for initial discussions:

The *Guide to Expanding Mitigation* explores how community officials can work with the arts and culture sector to support hazard mitigation, including the planning process. This guide is a starting place for community officials to initiate a conversation with arts and culture partners to make investments in mitigation and increase access to risk information.

The *Building Alliances for Equitable Resilience* resource inspires readers with actions and considerations for equitable practices they can incorporate as part of their day-to-day activities.
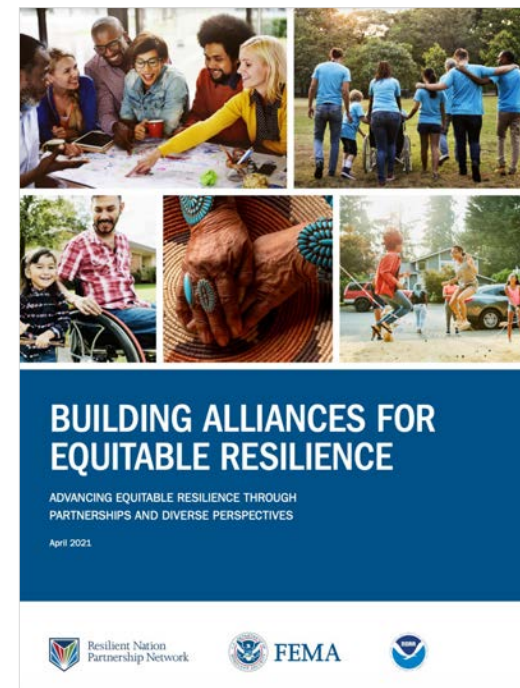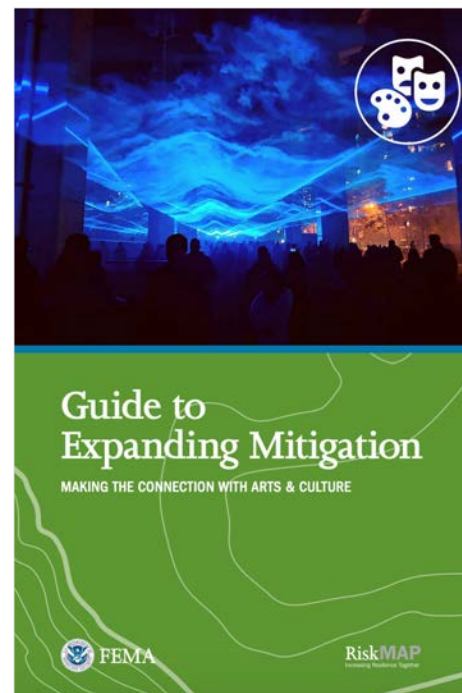
Step 2: Identify Opportunities to Build Resilience in Your Community

As a first step, FEMA and potential partners should assess the opportunities to build resilience in their community, such as raising awareness of specific hazards or highlighting successful mitigation activities. National and local resources that identify challenges and opportunities for resilience can be useful guides to understanding a community's top needs and priorities.

Social Listening, or analyzing community background through social media, can provide another lens into community needs. FEMA Region 8 found that a local community used "stormwater" to describe flooding. The distinction being this community did not feel they experienced "flooding," but did experience water intrusion through "stormwater" issues. This knowledge allows partners to employ the right messages to engage their intended audience.

Opportunities to build resilience come in many different forms. Engaging in neighborhood and community activities and conversations can provide inspiration for building resilience in your community.

EXAMPLES OF RESILIENCE RESOURCES TO HELP IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

- **Climate Action Plans**

- **Resilience Plans**

- **Hazard Mitigation Plans**

- **Community Wildfire Protection Plans**

- **Comprehensive Plans**

- **Grants Applications**

Step 3: Identify Potential Partners

Successful arts and experiential learning projects begin with identifying the right set of partners, including FEMA and local members of the community. Potential partners can represent diverse sectors such as community engagement, philanthropy, arts and culture, and more. Research and identify partners with relevant experience, shared goals, and capabilities. This will help identify the mutual value proposition for potential partners. It is also important to engage and collaborate with the local community early in the process.

Discussions of potential partners should include those that work with underserved populations (low-income, non-English speakers, etc.).

The *Resilient Nation Partnership Network* offers a platform to explore FEMA's existing partnerships at the national, regional, state and community levels.

POTENTIAL PARTNER EXAMPLES

- Local arts districts
- Artist-in-residence organizations
- Museums
- Relevant professional associations, including local chapters
- Charitable foundations
- Parks and recreation departments
- Art and design institutions, colleges and universities
- Transportation hubs
- Local cultural events and venues
- Youth groups and organizations
- Nonprofit organizations

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Step 4: Engage and Convene Potential Partners

Talk to potential partners about involvement

Convene introductory conversations with the most viable partner organizations. Explore 'outside the box' ideas and areas for alignment, such as using existing resources to maximize funding and capacity for project management.

It is also helpful to discuss roles and responsibilities and potentially establish the framework for a formal agreement such as a memorandum of understanding.

Step 5: Co-Create Goals and Measures of Success

Set Project Goals and Priorities

It is important for everyone involved in a potential project to co-create simple and clear project goals. Goals and priorities will help you consider additional partners who can work with you to strengthen and refine the vision.

The process of co-creating goals can help increase buy-in from all participants.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What overarching strategies or plans will this effort support?
- What are the specific resilience, hazard mitigation, and/or risk awareness goals?
- Are we driving awareness, action or activity?
- What is the message we want to convey?
- Who is our target audience?
- What capabilities do we have for leading this project? What are any gaps?
- What dependencies or outside factors might influence our capability to achieve success?
- What are the roles and responsibilities among partners?

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Step 5: Co-Create Goals and Measures of Success

In addition, it is important to discuss how the project will measure success.

Initial activities could include:

- Decide on a goal for the project.

- Set your intention (what are you trying to solve for, who is your target audience, and what do you want them to get out of this experience?)

- Gain consensus on defining what is being measured.

- Identify measures and indicators prior to the project kickoff.

- Choose indicators that are neutral, not open for interpretation, and easy to check—and when possible, include indicators that measure equitable outcomes.

WHEN YOU MEASURE, YOU SHOULD:

- Consider how well the measurement will show the intended response resulting from the arts or experiential learning project.

- Use mixed measurement methods that are both quantitative and qualitative.

- Establish measurement indicators throughout the project from beginning to end.

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Step 6: Collaboratively Develop Project Requirements

Developing clear project requirements can make engagement smoother down the road.

Partners should work together to develop project requirements that incorporate technical expertise and local knowledge, while resisting the urge to define specific arts or experiential learning concepts before engaging artists and community collaborators. This allows for greater creativity and innovation throughout the process.

These requirements will provide a solid foundation for additional conversations and outreach to bring a project to fruition.

EXAMPLE PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

- Project goals, objectives

- Equity and Inclusion

- Location

- Language requirements

- Process for selection

- Project Timeline

- Project milestone requirements

FEMA

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Other Important Considerations

The following is a partial list of other important considerations that should be discussed at the outset of a project:

Funding
Be clear on the funds you have, how they will be used, and who is responsible.

Plan
Determine how long the display will last as well as relocation, maintenance, removal, etc.

Safety
Consider the effects on foot/vehicle traffic, public safety and impacts to the surrounding environment.

Bids
Consider how to obtain bids for services the project requires.

Censorship
Discuss the project in detail to avoid censorship or freedom of speech conflicts.
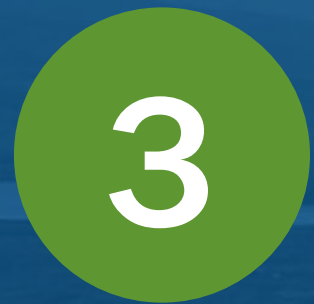
Local Laws/Ordinances
Build in extra time to ensure compliance with local regulations. Permits, approvals and permissions may need to be obtained, and they vary by jurisdiction.

Use and Ownership Rights
Clearly delineate all rights for using images and digital content, and ownership of any physical or digital products.

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3 Project Inspiration Library

Inspiration Library Overview

This **Project Inspiration Library** showcases examples of arts and experiential learning projects from around the world that relate to sustainability, resilience, climate adaptation and hazard mitigation. From murals to music to interactive experiences, these artists and organizations have been able to raise awareness, drive conversation, engage with new audiences, and more.

Additional information on each project can be found at the link in each project description.

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Holoscenes

Lars Jan

http://www.earlymorningopera.com/wp/projects/holoscenes

This performance features a huge aquarium that fills with water and then empties again, while actors inside are trying to go about regular activities like reading a newspaper, putting away their groceries or getting ready for bed.

Objective: Connect the short-term, everyday behaviors of individuals to the long-term patterns driving climate change. The performance manifests states of drowning — both in water and the larger systems of our own devising — challenging our capacity for long-term thinking and empathy.

Location: Tours globally; Former sites include Times Square (NYC), Gold Coast Games (Australia), London Burning (England), Istanbul Modern Museum of Art and more.
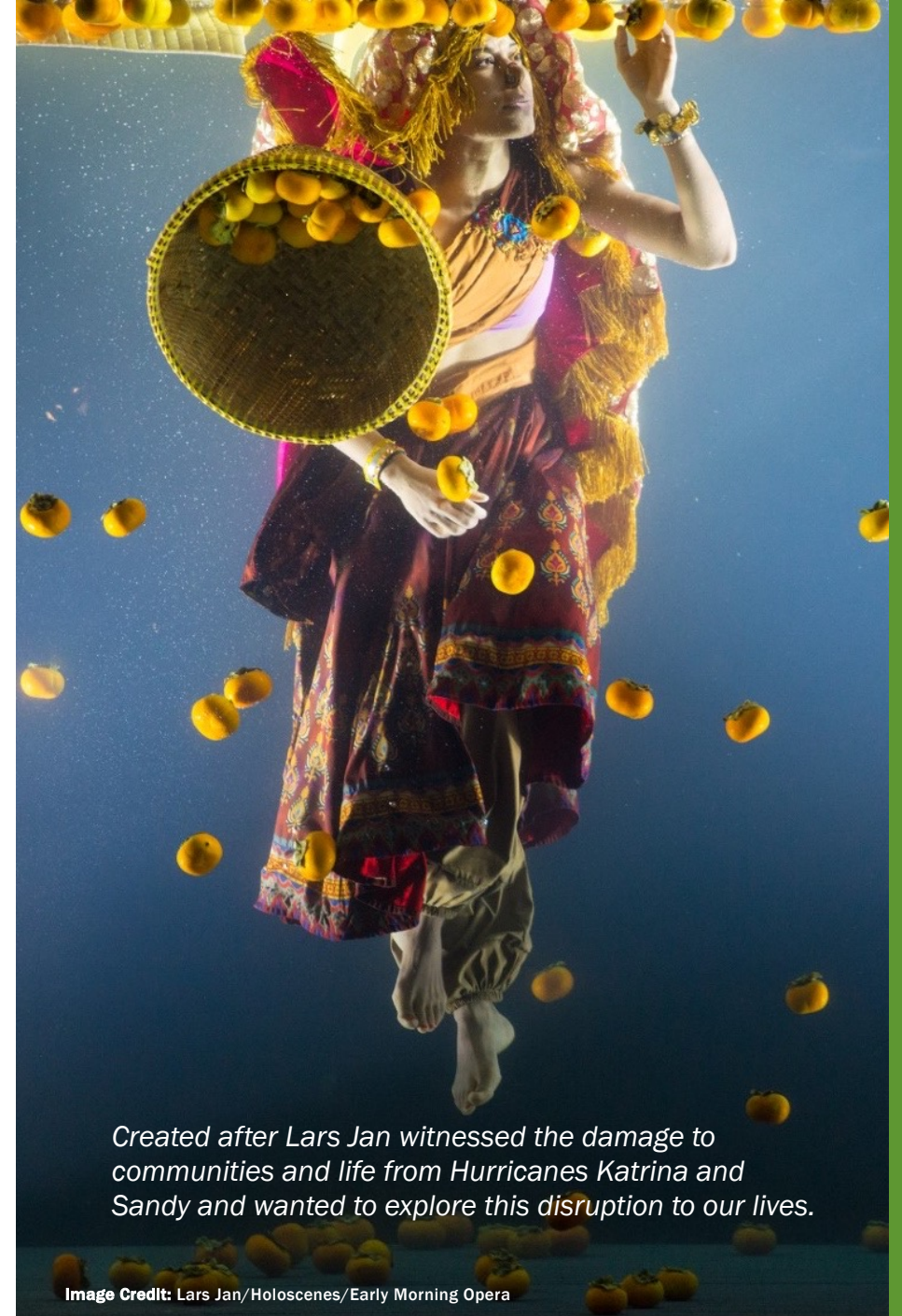
Created after Lars Jan witnessed the damage to communities and life from Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy and wanted to explore this disruption to our lives.

Image Credit: Lars Jan/Holoscenes/Early Morning Opera

Ice Watch

Olafur Eliasson

http://olafureliasson.net

Previously staged in Copenhagen and Paris, Ice Watch is a public art and experiential learning installation in London that encourages people to think about icebergs and larger repercussions of a rapidly changing climate. Over 100 tons of glacial ice were transported from the waters of Nuup Kangerlua fjord in Greenland. The ice had separated from large sheets and was melting in the ocean waters.

Objective: To serve as a visual reminder of the impact of climate change on the environment, provoke urgent change and inspire "...climate action to climate change." An interactive way to give passersby a stronger, visual understanding of the impact of climate change and the melting of the polar ice caps and rising waters.

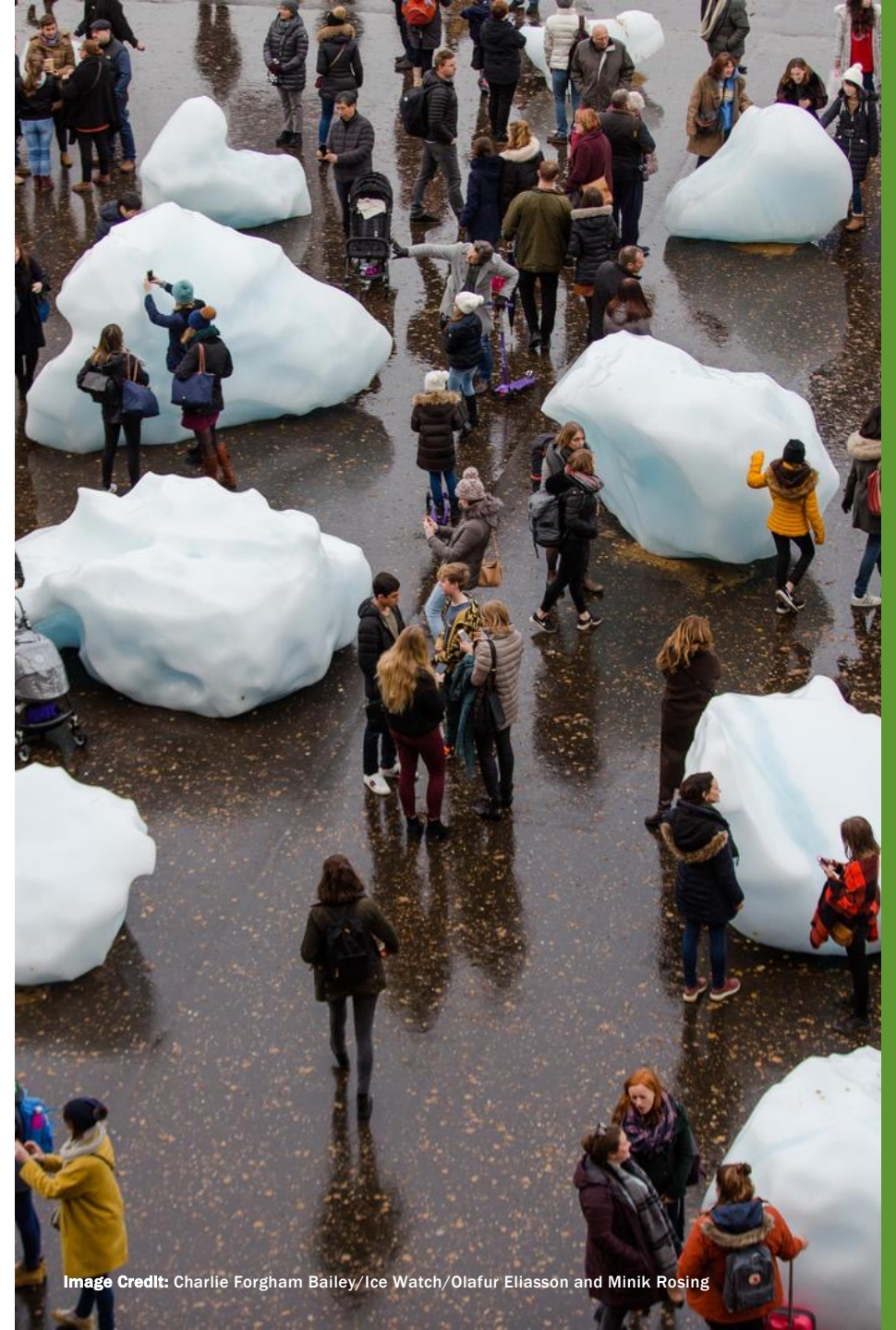**Location:** 2018, outside Tate Modern and Bloomberg's Headquarters in London, England.

Image Credit: Charlie Forgham Bailey/Ice Watch/Olafur Eliasson and Minik Rosing

Purple

John Akomfrah

http://icaboston.org/exhibitions/john-akomfrah-purple

This immersive, hour-long video installation consists of a six-screen video projection with surround sound in a darkened space.

The installation addresses the impact of climate change on communities and the environment.

Image Credit: ©Smoking Dogs Films; Courtesy Smoking Dogs Films and Lisson Gallery

The ClimateMusic Project

http://climatemusic.org

The purpose of The ClimateMusic Project is to communicate a sense of urgency about the climate crisis by combining the emotional power of music with climate science to drive meaningful action.

Through this Project, musicians, in collaboration with scientists, compose new science-guided music, hold performances and provide the opportunity for audiences to engage with scientists and other experts at those performances.

Image Credit: Fran Schulberg/Climate Music/The Climate Music Project

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Image Credit:
Ellie Johnston/World Climate Simulation/Climate Interactive

World Climate Simulation
Climate Interactive

http://climateinteractive.org

Materials for the World Climate Simulation at the Asheville Museum of Science in Asheville, NC. Students model a UN climate summit, with debates and negotiations. The proposed policies were evaluated for effects on temperature rise with a computer model, and the students playing government representatives worked out necessary tradeoffs to reach agreement.

Image Credit:
Emily Fano/Resilient Schools Consortium/The National Wildlife Federation

Resilient Schools Consortium

http://riscnyc.org

RiSC is a climate and resilience education program that empowers middle and high school youth to help create more climate resilient communities.

Through field trips, a project-based curriculum, and activities like tree planting and dune restoration, students gain climate science knowledge, explore climate justice, and learn about the natural and built solutions that help protect communities from climate impacts. Students also engage with community members and decision-makers at annual events.

Image Credit:
Matthew Kowal/The Art of Mass Gatherings/Majestic Collaborations

The Art of Mass Gatherings

https://theartofmassgatherings.com

An arts-focused and experiential approach to resilience recognizes that people who plan festivals are experienced with what it takes to build a city for a few days; their experience can help communities plan for a disaster.

This example is from the "Would You Trade Your Car For Bike?" audience participation skit at the Tour de Fat Festival.

Produced in partnership with Majestic Collaborations and Performing Arts Readiness.

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Washed Ashore

Artula Institute for Arts and Environmental Education

http://www.washedashore.org

Founded by Artistic Director, Angela Haseltine Pozzi, Washed Ashore is a project of Artula Institute for Arts and Environmental Education's non-profit organization.

The organization has created over 85 sculptures from over 30 tons of marine debris with over 14,000 volunteers helping since 2010. More than 35 million people have seen the sculptures in person.

Objective: Build and exhibit aesthetically powerful art to educate a global audience about plastic pollution in the ocean and waterways and to spark positive changes in consumer habits. Create curriculum in collaboration with NOAA, volunteer workshops, traveling exhibits, presentations, field trips and beach clean ups to educate and inspire the public.

Locations: Four traveling exhibits tour North America to zoos, aquariums, science centers, botanical gardens and museums. Home base is Bandon, Oregon.

Image Credit: Angela Haseltine Pozzi/Washed Ashore/Artula Institute for Arts and Environmental Education

Image Credit: Courtesy of FM Global/Earthquake Simulator

Earthquake Simulator

https://vimeo.com/269825644

Many companies are under-insured and under-prepared for natural disasters. An opportunity to educate companies was presented at a significant industry-wide event. FM Global simulated an immersive, augmented reality earthquake in the middle of the convention hall.

Location: RIMS Conference 2018

Animas by Brian House

https://brianhouse.net/works/animas/

Created in 2017, this art installation, composed of four panels of metal, takes real-time data from water quality sensors in the polluted waters of the Animas River in southwestern Colorado and turns them into sound. Each panel vibrates at its own resonant frequency.
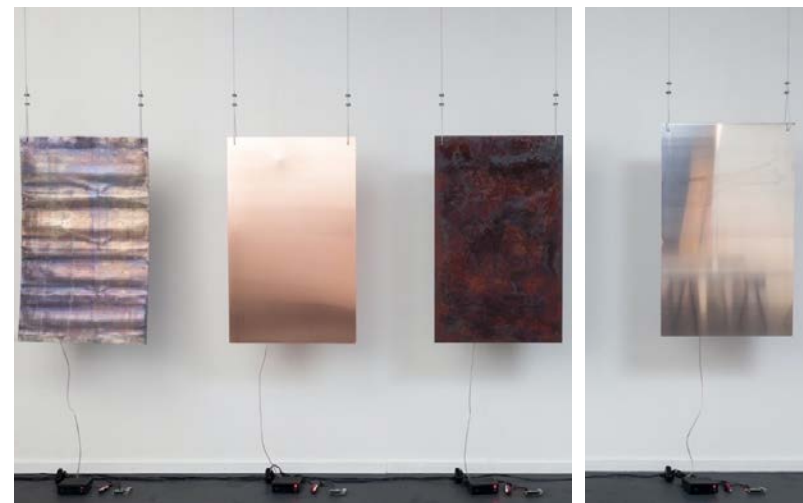

Image Credit: Brian House/Animas

Image Credit: Courtesy of UCR ARTS/Facing Fire: Art, Wildfire, and the End of Nature in the New West/ California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTS

Facing Fire, Art, Wildfire, and the End

California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTS

https://virtualucrarts.ucr.edu/facing-fire/

A curated collection of photojournalism and art photography by 16 photographers, this exhibit displays the wildfires that have plagued California in recent years and the consequences to local communities and the environment.

Image Credit: Matt Smith/Changing the Tune/Folk Alliance International

Changing the Tune

by Folk Alliance International

http://folk.org/changing-the-tune

This initiative focuses on resilience, and positioning artists to leaders to advance resilience before and after disasters. The organization considers how events set up for the music community can be a blueprint for how societies might respond to crises, being centered around practices of community care, solidarity, and mutual aid.

Produced in partnership with Majestic Collaborations and Performing Arts Readiness.

Image Credit: FEMA/Flood Stories/Pierce County, Washington

Flood Stories

Pierce County, Washington

www.co.pierce.wa.us/6082/FloodStories

Podcasts were created from a series of "Flood Stories," to drive awareness of flooding. These stories are told by residents who experienced flooding or helped their neighbors recover from its devastating effects.

RISE Challenge

Earth Force

https://earthforce.org/rise-challenge

The RISE Challenge is a partnership between FEMA, the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) and Earth Force. This experiential learning program is part classroom learning and part competition and summit, focused on natural hazards and student-led learning.

The RISE Challenge engages students in the exploration of their communities to determine where they are vulnerable to natural disasters. It tasks them with developing their own ideas for making their community more resilient. The program develops engaged citizens by building their resilience toolbox when they are still young.

Objectives: Improve community engagement in building resilience and improve student learning.

Locations: As of 2021, programs are available statewide in Colorado, Montana and Illinois.

Image Credit: Courtesy of Grace Edinger/RISE Challenge/Earth Force

Community Forms

FEMA Region 8 | Black Cube Artist Fellow Matt Barton

https://blackcube.art/exhibition/community-forms

Community Forms is an outdoor, permanent sculptural installation. Ray Mark Rinaldi's review in the Denver Post states, "It's art but not art, a skatepark but not a skatepark. And, at the same time, it's a drainage ditch that invites everyone to see their own personal place in the ecosystem." The design redirects runoff rainwater or snowmelt toward the river. There is interpretive signage describing the history of flooding on the South Platte and how individuals can be better prepared for future floods.

Community Forms is produced by Black Cube (Nomadic Art Museum), Chief Curator Cortney Lane Stell and artist Fellow Matt Barton. This is the pilot project for the FEMA Region 8 ArtWorks program, which shares the value of mitigation through art. RedLine Contemporary Art Center facilitated the process. Zeppelin Development and the David and Laura Merage Foundation provided financial support to Black Cube.

Objective: Engage new audiences in the mitigation discussion by integrating play, art and mitigation awareness.

Location: TAXI Campus, RiNo Art District, Denver, Colorado

Image Credit: Matt Barton/Community Forms, 2021/Photo by Third Dune Productions. Courtesy of the artist and Black Cube.

IMMERSED
FEMA

Guided by behavioral science principles, IMMERSED uses virtual reality technology to connect people on a more personal level to flood risks and ways to reduce them. The 5-minute IMMERSED experience engages users in flooding scenarios and provides hands-on learning from multiple perspectives.

Location: FEMA has several IMMERSED kits that can be used at events across the country.

Image Credit: IMMERSED/FEMA

FloodWalk
FEMA

In June 2019, FEMA Region 8 launched an augmented reality experience that visualizes the risks from flooding and tells the story of mitigation actions Denver has taken to improve the areas where people live, work and play.

The FloodWalk mobile app, which is centered in Denver's Confluence Park, features six unique experiences that spotlight past flood scenarios, as well as current and planned mitigation activities.

Location: The application is available on Google Play and Apple's App Store.

Image Credit: FloodWalk/FEMA

The Good of the Hive

Matt Willey

http://www.thegoodofthehive.com/

The Good of the Hive is both a global art project and organization based in an artist's personal commitment to hand-paint 50,000 honeybees in murals around the world. Fifty thousand is the number of bees necessary for a healthy, thriving hive. This effort is focused on highlighting the importance of bees and other pollinators while creating a growing symbol of the power in human connection.

Objectives: To ignite radical curiosity for planetary health issues through art and storytelling by placing visually compelling murals around the world--from rural locations to city centers.

Locations: Over the past five years, 35 murals have been created with over 8,700 hand-painted bees and large-scale works that can be found at places like the Smithsonian's National Zoo (Washington, D.C.), Dag Hammarskjold Plaza (New York City) and Burt's Bees Global Headquarters (Durham, NC).

Image Credit: Matt Willey/The Good of the Hive

The Peo-ple Cried Mer-cy in the Storm

Allison Janae Hamilton

http://allisonjanaehamilton.com

This monumental stack of tambourines is titled using lyrics from the song "Florida Storm," a hymn written in 1928 in response to the Great Miami Hurricane of 1926. The song became popular in the South after more than 5,000 Black migrant workers were killed by the Okeechobee Hurricane of 1928 and buried in unmarked mass graves.

The artist used tambourines as a symbol of celebration, war, storytelling and spirituality to invoke various ways that Southern Black communities have interfaced with storms both natural and human-caused.

Objective: Contemplate how climate-related disasters can expose existing social inequities and how affected communities contend with this twofold devastation.

Locations: Was on view at Storm King Art Center—a 500-acre outdoor museum in New York's Hudson Valley.

Image Credit: Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen/Max Yawney/ ©Allison Janae Hamilton.

The Building Alliances for Equitable Resilience – Audio Series

https://www.fema.gov/business-industry/resilient-nation-partnership-network/resources

To continue advancing conversations around equity and resilience, the RNPN produced the "Partner Voices" narratives featured in the "Building Alliances for Equitable Resilience" resource. The stories were authored from the perspectives of four diverse partners, with narration from Justin Knighten, FEMA director of External Affairs.

These original anecdotes describe why resilience is uniquely important to the speakers, their livelihoods and communities. The stories highlight the need to act to create a more resilient future.

Image Credit: Resilient Nation Partnership Network "Building Alliances for Equitable Resilience" Partner Voices Audio Series/FEMA

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Risk Management Directorate Communications Strategy Branch

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FEMA