

**CURRENT:**  
**LA WATER**  
Public Art  
Biennial 2016

**OK, We're Going For It!**  
**Public Art as Collective Practice**

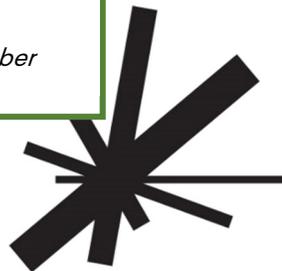
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White Paper

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**I'm interested to see how this work  
changes the government agencies  
we're working with.**

*- CURRENT:LA Team Member*





In our CURRENT:LA Water Social Impact Evaluation Report (Tate & Yates, 2017) we sought to describe **what happened**, to measure **effectiveness** relative to dimensions of success, and, when appropriate, suggest **ways forward**. While doing so, however, we kept coming across intriguing bits of what we'd call *explanatory* evidence – evidence that hinted at questions of **process** and **mechanism**. That is, questions of *why* and *how* did CURRENT:LA "work"?

- What characteristics of the **management team** may have enabled achievement of key objectives?
- What aspects of the project's **culture** may have helped move tasks along more efficiently than expected?
- What **strategies** and **relationships** may have facilitated the realization of future-looking social and economic objectives?

## Modeling for High Performance

Our task in this white paper is to map our errant bits of evidence onto a theory-informed management model that could be referenced for subsequent iteration(s) of CURRENT:LA. Our "audience" is first and foremost the project team at the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, along with other divisions that worked or will be working on the project in the future, funders considering support for similar projects, and potential applicants to Bloomberg Philanthropies' Public Art Challenge program.

We're not interested in identifying a "best practice" exemplar or dictating a set of shoulds, oughts, and musts for managers of public art programs – nor do we have sufficient evidence to do so. Rather, we're singling out a collection of approaches that show *promise*, that we think contributed to the operational successes of CURRENT:LA. Interestingly, these don't reference curatorial processes or creativity or aesthetics or other themes associated with the arts sector; rather, what we heard and observed fit within the empirical and theoretical literature on **effective teams and workgroups**.

Accordingly, we begin with an overview of what we mean by **promising practices**, then continue with a look at the substantial empirical and theoretical research on **high-performing teams**. Using interview and convening data collected throughout the project, we illustrate connections between CURRENT:LA and characteristics of high performers – from a shared, inspiring vision to sufficient paper clips. To close, we've sketched a simple model of workgroup management as launching point for planning, monitoring, and accountability purposes.

## A Quick Trip on the Promising Road to Best Practices

Before a new model, strategy, or intervention can be identified as a "best practice," it must be tested, validated through both research and fieldwork, and shown to be effective for several practitioners. In the meantime, though, how should we distinguish and talk about early-stage practices and projects such as CURRENT:LA? Projects somewhat beyond experimental, having shown some success but have not been replicated or field-tested by other organizations?

Both the nonprofit and corporate sectors grapple with the task of categorizing levels of evidence. For our purposes, we've developed a rubric and criteria (see Appendix WP-A and WP-B, pp. 15- 16) referencing parameters developed for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by the Compassion Capital Fund National Resource Center (2010), along with additional conditions identified by Helsel et al. (2006).

Based on our rubric, the inaugural CURRENT:LA sat snugly within the **promising practice** category (Table 1). While exhibiting some emergent characteristics, the design was well-grounded in field-based and institutional knowledge and the management team highly experienced public art professionals – "promising with a sprinkle of experiment and a dollop of expertise."

**Table 1. What are Promising Practices?**

<b>Promising Practices</b>	
... show <b>potential during early stages and pilots</b> , but an <b>insufficient</b> amount of original data has been collected to determine <b>consistent</b> effectiveness.	
<b>Criteria?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Suggested</b> effectiveness in addressing a common problem.</li> <li>• Successful use in <b>one</b> organization and context.</li> <li>• <b>Potential</b> for replicability.</li> <li>• <b>Limited supporting data</b> from comparison to <b>objective benchmarks</b> with positive results.</li> <li>• <b>Limited supporting data</b> from comparison to <b>subjective standards</b> with positive results.</li> <li>• Limited supporting data from <b>internal assessment</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Common questions?</b>	Evidence of shared concerns with other practitioners/field
<b>Effective?</b>	Suggested
<b>Replicated?</b>	Potential
<b>Evaluation?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Informed" by external-internal</li> <li>• Findings shared, discussed, distributed</li> </ul>
<b>Underlying theory?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not unsubstantiated but still weak; articulated chain of reasoning or theory of change</li> <li>• Exploratory</li> </ul>
<b>Resources?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation team: External evaluator guiding practitioner-researchers</li> </ul>



**Figure 1. Beyond outputs and outcomes: A new paradigm for social practice public art**

"Promising" is not only a good description of the evidentiary heft of our findings, but also of the project design itself. Often referred to as a "proof of concept," CURRENT:LA represented an agency-wide attempt to shift the biennial paradigm from a curatorial model focused on artworks and the art world to one in which communities and visitors are stakeholders, interactivity and participation are aesthetic choices, and the public art process is a democratizing force. In this new paradigm, the City of Los Angeles **IS** the experience.

Observing and documenting the development of a new paradigm comes with significant challenges. What exactly – or even inexactly – were we looking *for*? How would we know "it" when we saw it? As we did throughout our research and reporting process, we drew foundational language and framing devices directly from proposal documents submitted to Bloomberg Philanthropies. A slide from a Research Lab presentation (Figure 1) shows the highly varied collage of ideas, questions, purposes, and values that drove the CURRENT:LA team.

### **Social Practice for Social Impact: Artwork as Teamwork**

The processes, practices, and products of public art are very different from those found in individual studios where artists toil in inspired solitude. Even simple neighborhood projects – e.g., a painted fence, shaded bench, or memorial placard – are expected to address the desires, biases, fears, and quirks of groups that may rarely see eye-to-eye. High-profile public art projects are further distinguished by significant levels of cooperation between, at the very least, artmakers, funders, residents, government agencies and departments, and the business community.

People working together in well-managed groups, with established roles, rules, and responsibilities, can accomplish astounding feats of imagination and innovation – saving lives, creating beauty, advancing science and the arts. In them, individual vision and purpose are certainly important as contributors to the whole, to the *gestalt* of an endeavor, but are not allowed to dominate the "ensemble sound."

CURRENT:LA was at its core a collective practice. From early planning meetings to the selection of partners to installing artworks, the process avoided the prevailing top-down hierarchy of city government in favor of a horizontal, convene-and-confer approach to getting things done. The project was shaped and realized through regular in-person meet-ups, phone conferences, and active use of an online project management platform (Basecamp). It was not simply a group of people who worked well together – rather, at its best, it resembled what is commonly referred to as a **high-performing team**.



What will I miss? The **cross-divisional conversation**, working with the partners. The **teamwork**. DCA staff and the community of artists **connected** in new ways.

– CURRENT Team Member

### **What is a High Performing Team?**

There are as many definitions for teams as there are researchers writing about them. Guzzo and Dickson (1996) prefer the term *work group*, and assert that the "tasks perform[ed] as members of a group . . . are embedded in one or more larger social systems" (p. 309). "A purposeful, open, sociotechnical system in a state of tension between change and stability" is offered by Kur (1996, p. 35) in his team model based on Tuckman's (1965) four-stage process. Teams are "collective idea power" (Gustafson & Kleiner, 1994, p. 16) with "performance objective[s] . . . and coordination" (Larson & LaFasto, 1989, p. 19), self-managed by members "work[ing] together to secure what they cannot accomplish on their own" (Bandura, 2000, p. 75).

The wide variety of organizational, psychological, socio-cultural, and ecological definitions of teams demands careful vetting. For this discussion, we've elected to draw on the work of Hill and Northouse (2004) and Katzenbach and Smith (1993b) to generate a definition that is both practical and reflective of significant traits of superior teams.

*High performing teams are groups of people with complementary skills, working in organizational settings with high-trust cultures, who are committed to a shared, common purpose and who hold themselves mutually accountable for a set of performance goals, approaches, and work processes.*

A *high-performing team* goes beyond a group of people working well together. Member commitment is deeply personal (Collins, 1995), language and symbols unique and private (Bolman & Deal, 2017), communication higher (Gustafson & Kleiner, 1994), and sacrifice to the greater good of both the team and stakeholders deeper (Eggensberger, 2004).

### **Learning from the Literature**

Over the last three decades, research on work group excellence and team effectiveness has evolved considerably. Since Bettenhausen's (1991) meta-review examining "the dynamics of small social groups" (p. 345), dozens of articles looking at teams in organizational settings have appeared in both scholarly publications and the popular press. These have included studies of educational systems (Dukewits & Gowin, 1996; Bandura, 2000; Sharpe & Templin, 1997), sports teams and organizations (McNutt & Wright, 1995; Ige & Kleiner, 1997; Brady & Reavill, 1999), healthcare and medical settings (Øvretveit et al., 2002; Rathbun, 2004), the military (Eggensberger, 2004), and business and manufacturing (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993b; Landy & Backer, 1987; Sims & Lorenzi, 1992; Yeatts & Hyten, 1998).

We were attempting something that was **big and bold and new** for the Department and new for the City [of Los Angeles]. As a result, this initiative allowed us to **work differently**, to **think differently** about public art.

– CURRENT Team Member

Although not exhaustive, our review of the literature suggested four foundational characteristics common to high-performing teams regardless of sector or activity.

1. The first is a **strong, shared commitment to an inspiring goal**;
2. Second, a **supportive organizational context**;
3. Third, **internal and external accountability**; and
4. Fourth, an **ethos of trust** that distinguishes both inter- and intra-team relationships, as well as the overall workplace culture.

We were like a tiny little **community** in this setting that was completely new to most of us there. It was **very unifying**. It's like for all of us to be that kind of lost together made us a community.

– CURRENT Team Member

**A strong, shared commitment to an inspiring goal.** Goals determine a team's ability to establish and maintain high levels of performance. A sense of purpose (Gustafson & Kleiner, 1994), objectives (Brady & Reavill, 1999), mission (Parsons, 1998), shared vision (McNutt & Wright, 1995), "a deep sense of linkage with a larger strategy" (Eggensperger, 2004, p. 56), "a defined focus" (Castka, Bamber, Sharp, & Belohoubek 2001, p. 127) – the language is different but the implications are the same.

High performing teams shape purpose in response to a demand or an opportunity. (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 105)

Hackman's (1990) "powerful early events" (p. 482) includes the setting of measurable performance goals in response to a significant problem or challenge, while Larson and LaFasto (1989) argue that well-articulated, clear goals are the first and most important predictor of team success.

Issues dependent on goal setting and goal sharing include team *cohesion* and *composition* (Campion et al., 1993; Guzzo & Dickson, 1996; McNutt & Wright, 1995). Team members *cohere* around shared goals, and goal-directed tasks attract the specific competencies and personalities that *compose* a team.

- **Cohesion** refers to a multi-faceted construct of familiarity, communication, longevity, and automation that supports performance excellence (Guzzo & Dickson, 1996).
- **Composition**, the "right mix of expertise" (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 105), is related to cohesion in that both structural factors and relationships play important roles in building effectiveness. These factors include heterogeneity of abilities (Yeatts & Hyten, 1998; Hamilton, Nickerson, & Owan, 2003), and member preference for collaborative teamwork (Larson & LaFasto, 1989).

I would like to have seen more **team cohesion** around the water issue. That was the weakest link, between the issue and the artworks.

– CURRENT Team Member



And we can't overlook the *motivational* aspects of shared goals. Goals dictate our reasons to work together, to work hard, or even to work at all. Within the context of high-performing teams, an elevating goal (Larson & LaFasto, 1989) is one that drives superior effort and commitment, creating a "sense of urgency" (p. 33) and import. Bandura (2000) places this motivating locus of collective agency in the minds of group members: "It is people acting coordinatively on a shared belief . . ." (p. 76). The motivational variables of active choice, persistence, and effort (Clark & Estes, 2008) are inextricably intertwined with goals, whether at the individual, team, or organizational level. **"When purpose and goals are built on one another and are combined with team commitment, they become a powerful engine"** (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993b, p. 113).

A shared commitment to inspiring goals is not without its risks. The effects of groupthink on high-performing teams have been extensively documented in studies examining events such as the Challenger disaster and the collapse of Enron. An evangelical aura can collect around high performing teams (Collins, 1995), an attitude of exclusivity that can lead to workplace resentment over the privileges and attention given to a powerful, successful in-group (Northouse, 2004). The arrogance of over-confidence is a danger as well: Tunnel vision about the superiority of both team goals and team membership can result in severely reduced performance and even team disintegration (Guzzo & Dickson, 1996). Nonetheless, both research and practice are conclusive regarding not just the desirability of shared team goals, but also their central role in team planning, composition and cohesion, motivation, and group self-efficacy.

We had a discussion at a really high level about "here's the project" and **we got buy-in at the top**. Which I think was important. That trickled down as well.

– *CURRENT Team Member*



I wonder if we'd been **freer of the system** – contracts, paperwork, invoicing, that stuff – would we have used our **time** better?

– *CURRENT Team Member*

***A supportive organizational context.*** Teams are dependent on the resources supplied by the organizational context in which they operate: Appropriate materials, accessible lines of communication, plentiful data, and well-timed training opportunities are all important to the fostering of excellent performance.

We're using "context" to refer to everything from paper and pencils to work settings and timely scheduling of meetings and tasks. A high performing team is "given the resources it needs to get the job done" (Larson & LaFasto, 1989, p. 109) – in particular, workplace **assets** and **protocols, training** and **feedback**, and **rewards** and **reinforcement**.

We just needed **more time** to work all of these things out. That was the biggest challenge. Trying to get the City [of Los Angeles] and other government entities to **move much quicker** than they are comfortable with or know how to. And that I think is kind of taxing for the relationships.

– CURRENT Team Member

**Training and feedback.** Skill gaps not only undermine effectiveness, but also disable interdependency and collaboration. Is technical assistance readily available to individuals and the group as a whole? (Campion, et al. 1993; Hyatt & Ruddy, 1997; Hackman, 2002) Does coaching "maximize individual skill development [in combination] with training in team execution"? (McNutt & Wright, 1995, p. 30) "Investing in plenty of relevant training" (Church, 1998, p. 48) will enable the transformation of "I" to "We." Feedback is also of the best ways to improve team effectiveness. "Group members need to process how well they did on achieving their task, as well as how well they did interpersonally" (Dukewits & Gowin, 1996, p. 14).

**Rewards and reinforcement.** Recognition for team accomplishments and collective achievement is a cornerstone of high performance (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993B; Larson & LaFasto, 1989). Factors affecting team effectiveness are contingent on reward systems that team members believe are fair and equitable. These factors include work group confidence (Campion et al., 1993; Hyatt & Ruddy, 1997), responsiveness and timeliness (Brady & Reavill, 1999), group efficacy beliefs (Guzzo & Dickson, 1996), and motivation (Hackman, 1990). Reward systems can take many forms. Campion et al. (1993) observed an increase in sharing behaviors when group and individual achievements were recognized separately, while Church (1998) asserted that "team members need to share a common fate" (p. 44). Hyatt and Ruddy (1997) support rewards that advance group performance in addition to individual performance, a finding echoed by Larson and LaFasto (1989).

**Workplace assets and protocols.** Control of materials, equipment, finances, scheduling, and the work environment is the responsibility of team managers and organizational leaders. They signal their commitment to team-based approaches through the proper allocation of resources. Is there sufficient time for conception, planning, implementation, and management of team goals and tasks? (Dukewits & Gowin, 1996; Parsons, 1998; Wheelan, 1999). Are communication and information systems in place? Do they incorporate both appropriate technology *and* the encouragement of open, honest dialogue? (Hamilton et al., 2003; Hyatt & Ruddy, 1997). Management's support of team goals should be considered a resource as well (Campion et al., 1993).

This speaks to a definite need for the next CURRENT to include a strategic approach to **integrating the "issue"** within the team, **training** for a core group of ambassadors who communicate with the public.

– CURRENT Team Member



The **high-impact teamwork** created improved **responsibility** and **accountability** among the City Family. I've changed my approach to providing solutions to other city departments attempting to do something new and innovative. **Relationships improved** through new and unusual collaborations.

- CURRENT Team Member

### **Internal and external accountability.**

Although related to reward systems, accountability reaches beyond recognition mechanisms to include norms and standards of responsibility, such as those between team members and between the team and its stakeholders. Stakeholders can include audiences, funders, bosses, co-workers, other teams and partners, etc. – both the people served and the people who serve. Standards, whether implicit or detailed in an employee handbook, can be broadly understood as "pressure[s] to achieve a required or expected level of performance" (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). Implied here as well are the informal norms and rules that shape member-to-member behaviors and expectations (Bolman & Deal, 2017; McNutt & Wright, 1995).

It is in the complex interface between individual accountability and external pressure to succeed that high performance becomes possible. Larson and LaFasto (1989) detail five points where the demands of accountability drive achievement, namely

- individual/personal standards
- team expectations
- consequences of success or failure
- pressure and oversight from leaders
- pressure from outside the organization

Everyone was like, "I've **got your back**. Make it happen! **BOOM!**"

- CURRENT Team Member

Wheelan's (1999) examination of effective teams ties norms and assessments to successful conflict management. Clear accountability structures allow useful "task-related deviance" (p. 38), while restricting detours into unrelated projects or social interactions.

**Ethos of trust.** Trust has been identified as a set of beliefs (Yeatts & Hyten, 1998), a form of social capital (Fukuyama, 1995), an attitude (Cohen & Bailey, 1997), a value (Eggensperger, 2004), predictive of collective agency (Bandura, 2000), "a formal system and . . . web of interpersonal connection" (Parsons, 1998, p. 4), and an atmosphere (Gustafson & Kleiner, 1994).

I'll miss the **speed**, the **quick decision-making**. Balls got picked up immediately. You just **trusted** people.

- CURRENT Team Member



Our conception of trust as an *ethos* encompasses all of these definitions by framing it as the activator of team characteristics in organizational settings. Mutual trust and interdependence differentiate the highest performers from their less effective peers (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993b; Dukewits & Gowin, 1996; Parsons, 1998; Herzog, 2001).

We're always battling with people to get things done. With CURRENT, **people couldn't be peevish or fearful.**

– CURRENT Team Member

Trust is foundational to group efficacy. Echoing social-cognitive theories on individual efficacy, team members must trust in their personal capabilities and in the capabilities and commitment of colleagues (Bandura, 2000). The team must also trust the organization to supply resources such as time and materials, as well as to monitor, offer feedback on, and reward performance (Larson & LaFasto, 1989; Hackman, 1990, 2002; Sims & Lorenzi, 1992; Dukewits & Gowin, 1996).

Furthermore, as accountability embraces the formal and informal team norms that dictate appropriate interpersonal behaviors, an *ethical* trust underlies successful team performance. "Trust and interdependence [are] necessary to move [members] from individual accountability to mutual accountability" (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993b, p. 109).



There's a lot more **motivation** for and **interest** in our [City Family] departments **collaborating** now. I think understanding how it worked through this process can **help that happen** more.

– CURRENT Team Member

I think the thing that was important for me was to **keep the promises that were made** to the public . . . It was very important for us to **keep our word** to the Council and the community members so the next time something happens – **they'll believe this process is possible.**

– CURRENT Team Member

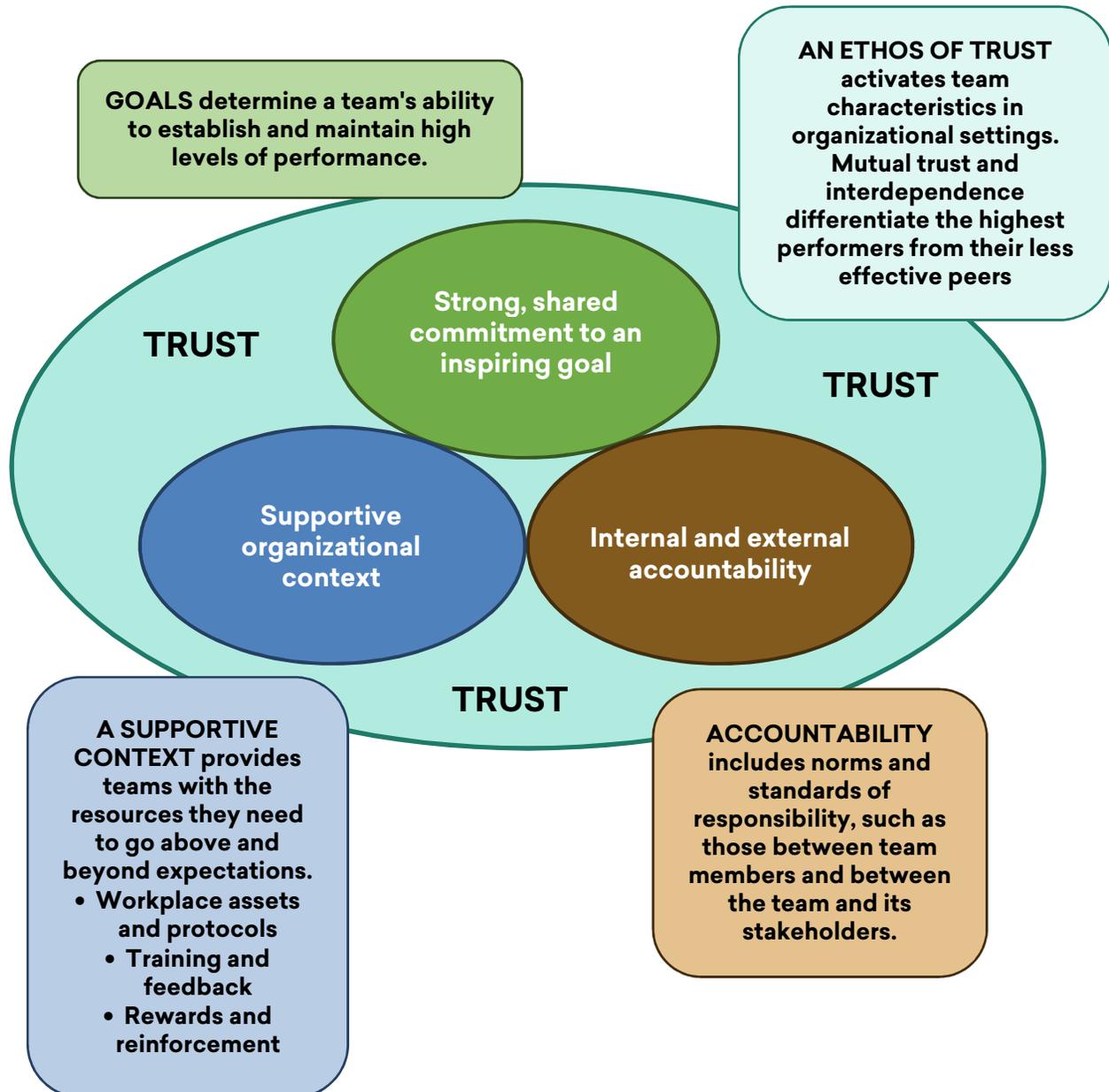
## From Theory to Practice

In undertaking to account for the **why** and **how** of CURRENT:LA's successes and failures, our decision to delve into the literature on high-performing teams was deliberate. When writing about their hoped-for paradigm shift in how public art is created and experienced, the DCA explicitly wanted to center collaboration, to break away from the solo artist/singular vision pattern, and to bring the public into the process. To put the *social* into the *practice* of public art. The size and complexity of the resulting project demanded the skilled input and deep knowledge of a variety of experts working together towards a common goal – the very definition of a **high-performing team**.

In Figure 2 (next page), we've modeled the managerial themes we've examined through the literature: A shared, elevating goal, a supportive context, and accountability systems all nested within a culture of trust. As we observed during our work on CURRENT:LA, the four are mutually reliant determinants of effectiveness. Each functions most robustly in the presence of the other three – cobbling strategies together may get things done but still fail to result in exceptional performance. That said, one or another of the characteristics will rise to prominence depending on the task at hand: Teams are mobile,

evolving entities that cohere around particular problems and objectives. Even groups that stay together for years change the weight they place on different factors as the team develops and tackles new challenges and projects.

**Figure 2. Modeling for High Performance**



Of course in the real world, no team, however high performing, sits around a table asking, "OK, how about our strong, shared commitment to an inspiring goal?" Our model is less a "how-to" than it is a "think about this" for project designers, leaders, managers, and funders. And not just during the initial design and planning phases – it's as much a diagnostic tool as it is a guidebook for building and managing effective teams. For

example, during CURRENT:LA Water when a crisis erupted or an issue remained unsolved, was it because . . .

- . . . a critical operational or conceptual objective had not been communicated to the field staff?
- . . . not enough resources – time, staff, materials – had been allocated for that particular site or program?
- . . . team members did not believe their concerns were being taken seriously or were even being discounted by higher-ups?

As we've noted previously, the project team was both aware of and proactive about addressing problems as they arose during each stage of the process. Where the model can help is in ensuring that the *source* of a problem is properly identified – and, in turn, that the solution is a good match to the problem and that follow-up actions can be appropriately monitored and assessed.

With themes selected and proposals moving forward for the second CURRENT:LA, it's essential that planners review the **hows** and **whys** of what worked – and maybe even more importantly, what *didn't* work – the first time around. Improving on successes and correcting stumbles will enable the DCA and its partners to continue creating memorable experiences for Angeleños and a lasting legacy for the city's cultural ecosystem.



The City [of Los Angeles] will create a **new paradigm** for public art, one not found in traditional "best practices" typically referenced in the field . . . one that couples broad **collaboration** with a government agency and results in relevant, timely artwork that increases **social capital**.

*– DCA proposal submitted to Bloomberg Philanthropies, 2015*

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**Appendix WP-A**  
**Differentiating Types of Practice-Based Research**  
 (CCFNRC & Publow, 2010; Helsel et al., 2006)

TYPE	CRITERIA
<p><b>Emerging Practice</b></p> <p>The practice is well articulated and recognizable as distinct with "<b>face</b>" <b>validity</b> or <i>common sense test</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes practices that are not based on research or theory and on which original data have not been collected, but for which <b>anecdotal evidence</b> and <b>professional wisdom</b> exist.</li> <li>• Incorporates the <b>philosophy, values, characteristics, and indicators</b> of other positive/effective programs/practices.</li> <li>• These include practices/new technologies that practitioners have tried and <b>claimed effectiveness</b> but not researched.</li> <li>• Has an <b>evaluation plan</b> in place to measure program outcomes, but it does <b>not yet have evaluation data available</b> to demonstrate effectiveness.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Promising Practices</b></p> <p>Show <b>potential during early stages and pilots</b>, but an <b>insufficient</b> amount of original data has been collected to determine <b>consistent</b> effectiveness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Suggested</b> effectiveness in addressing a common problem.</li> <li>• Successful use in <b>one</b> organization and context.</li> <li>• <b>Potential</b> for replicability.</li> <li>• <b>Limited supporting data</b> from comparison to <b>objective benchmarks</b> with positive results.</li> <li>• <b>Limited supporting data</b> from comparison to <b>subjective standards</b> with positive results.</li> <li>• Limited supporting data from <b>internal assessment</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Field-Tested Best Practice</b></p> <p>Shown to work <b>effectively</b> and produce <b>successful outcomes</b> and is supported to some degree by subjective and objective data sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Effectiveness</b> in addressing a common problem.</li> <li>• Effectiveness in <b>more than one</b> organization and in more than one context.</li> <li>• <b>Replicability</b> on a <b>limited</b> scale.</li> <li>• <b>Supporting data</b> from comparison to <b>objective benchmarks</b> with positive results.</li> <li>• <b>Supporting data</b> from comparison to <b>subjective standards</b> with positive results.</li> <li>• Supporting data from an <b>internal assessment</b> or <b>external evaluation</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research-Validated Best Practice</b></p> <p><b>Highest degree of proven effectiveness</b> supported by objective, subjective, and comprehensive research and evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Proven effectiveness</b> in addressing a common problem.</li> <li>• Proven effectiveness in <b>more than one</b> organization and in more than one context.</li> <li>• <b>Replicability</b> on a <b>broad</b> scale.</li> <li>• <b>Conclusive data</b> from comparison to <b>objective benchmarks</b> with positive results.</li> <li>• <b>Conclusive data</b> from comparison to <b>subjective standards</b> with positive results.</li> <li>• Conclusive data from a <b>comprehensive and objective evaluation by an external, qualified source</b> (most often an academic institution or individual with appropriate credentials).</li> </ul>

**Appendix WP-B**  
**A Practice-Based Research Continuum**  
(Tate, 2012)

	<b>Emerging Practice</b> The practice is well articulated and recognizable as distinct with " <b>face</b> " <b>validity</b> or <i>common sense test</i> .	<b>Promising Practice</b> Show <b>potential during early stages and pilots</b> , but an <b>insufficient</b> amount of original data has been collected to determine <b>consistent</b> effectiveness.	<b>Field-Tested Best Practice</b> Shown to work <b>effectively</b> and produce <b>successful outcomes</b> and is supported to some degree by subjective and objective data sources.	<b>Research-Validated Best Practice</b> <b>Highest degree of proven effectiveness</b> supported by objective, subjective, and comprehensive research and evaluation.
<b>Common questions?</b>	Local, with some understanding of possible significance	Evidence of shared concerns with other practitioners/field	Questions recognized as significant in the field	Questions recognized as critical and significant in the field
<b>Effective?</b>	Anecdotal	Suggested	Limited effectiveness	Proven effectiveness
<b>Replicated?</b>	No	Potential	Limited	Yes
<b>Evaluation?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning stages</li> <li>• Informal; feedback for monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Informed" by external-internal</li> <li>• Findings shared, discussed, distributed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong internal or external</li> <li>• Findings disclosed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conclusive external</li> <li>• Findings published</li> </ul>
<b>Underlying theory?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared "professional knowledge: Values, philosophy, indicators characteristics</li> <li>• Experiential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not unsubstantiated but still weak; articulated chain of reasoning or theory of change</li> <li>• Exploratory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairly strong, several sources, "generally accepted in the profession"</li> <li>• Recognized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-documented, varied methodologies, corroborated, reviewed</li> <li>• Established</li> <li>• Standard</li> </ul>
<b>Resources?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality practitioners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation team: External evaluator guiding practitioner-researchers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-researchers: External evaluators working with internal evaluators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External evaluators/researchers leading internal evaluators</li> </ul>

## **About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs**

As a leading progressive arts and cultural agency, DCA empowers Los Angeles' vibrant communities by supporting and providing access to quality visual, literary, musical, performing, and educational arts programming; managing vital cultural centers; preserving historic sites; creating public art; and funding services provided by arts organizations and individual artists.

Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage LA's residents and visitors, and ensure LA's varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA's mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike.

DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through grant making, public art, community arts, and strategic marketing and development. DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles.

**For more information, please visit [culturela.org](http://culturela.org).**

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Bloomberg Philanthropies works in over 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2015, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed over half a billion dollars.

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## **About Kamella Tate Associates, LLC**

**KTA/LLC** is a Los Angeles-based firm providing research, program design, evaluation, and fund development services to nonprofits in the arts, healthcare, and education sectors. Clients have included the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, The Music Center, Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, Film Independent, Pew Center for Arts and Heritage, Southern California Grantmakers, T.H.E. Health & Wellness Centers, Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival, among others. KTA/LLC also offers customized workshops in research methods and program evaluation throughout the U.S., working with practitioners, funders, and policy makers.

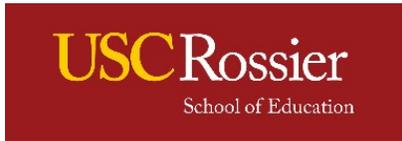
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## **About the USC Rossier School of Education**

The mission of the USC Rossier School of Education is to improve learning in urban education locally, nationally and globally. Rossier leads the field in innovative, collaborative solutions to improve education outcomes. Our work is field-based, in the classroom, and online, and reflects a diversity of perspectives and experiences. We pride ourselves on innovation in all our programs, preparing teachers, administrators, and educational leaders who are change agents. We support the most forward-thinking scholars and researchers, and are leaders in using cutting-edge technology to scale up our quality programs for maximum impact.

Rossier is part of the University of Southern California, one of the world's leading private research universities. Located in the heart of Los Angeles, we offer students a rich urban environment in which to learn, as well as many international opportunities for research and study. At USC, students come from all 50 states and 110 other countries, including more than 5,000 international students each academic year.

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