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Testimony of Juliana Cope, Director of Development and Programs Manager,
International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP)

Oversight - Cultural Plan - Next Steps

Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations, New
York City Council, City Hall

Good afternoon, Chairman Van Bramer, Commissioner Finkelppearl and respected
members of the City Council's Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and
International Intergroup Relations.

My name is Juliana Cope and I am the Director of Development and Programs Manager
of the International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP). Our organization has received
significant support from the City since our founding 22 years ago. ISCP has since been a
model locally and internationally for what an arts residency program can be. We very
much consider ourselves a Brooklyn institution. We thank you and our very supportive
Councilmember, Antonio Reynoso for understanding the significance and importance of
providing time and space for artists and curators to work and exchange ideas with fellow
permanent and temporary New Yorkers.

My testimony focuses on the potential impact of the Cultural Plan, in terms of both
qualitative and quantitative benefits to New York City.

First, a brief introduction to who we are: ISCP is the most comprehensive program of its
kind in New York and in the United States, and we are the fourth largest international
visual arts residency program in the world—the larger ones are based in Amsterdam,
Beijing, and London. ISCP supports the creative advancement of extremely talented
contemporary visual artists and curators who come to us from all over the globe, and
who originate from New York City as well.

ISCP in East Williamsburg, is the biggest visual arts organization in District 34. We are
located in an outlying area that is a highly unique neighborhood, with intermixed
industry and residential buildings, and with predominantly Latino/Hispanic low to
moderate income families living nearby.

ISCP is providing extensive, excellent public programming on contemporary art, which
is educational and free to the public. We offer direct access to the flow of ideas *in
person*, exposure for all visitors to what is happening culturally in other parts of the
world, keeping New Yorkers global, aware, and stimulated by a wealth of cultural
practices.

iscp international studio & curatorial program

New York City is a place of extraordinary diversity, mutual respect, inclusiveness and justice. The Cultural Plan is an opportunity to demonstrate, protect and transmit these values of racial and social equity.

The costs for people working in the visual arts is steep, it is great that the city supports models such as ISCP's Ground Floor program, helping talented and needy artists secure studio space and be part of the larger international network we and this city provide. The Cultural Plan should ensure that people from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds can participate in all aspects of the arts, including being the next generation of leaders.

I personally feel fortunate to live and work in this city, a leading model of healthy cultural life, thriving throughout all neighborhoods. We must continue to consider our work within a larger context, not only looking at best practices of other international cities, but also to consider the national and international climate. With this Cultural Plan, working collaboratively across institutions and disciplines, New York City can continue to be a leader in the United States, advocating for cultural workers' rights to mobility and sanctuary. The Plan can also encourage collaboration and advocacy, and can point other funders to areas of need. It can serve as a statement to not just inhabitants of New York City, but to the world, about who we are, and how we will continue to do our important cultural work.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.