

## CultureMakers

### **Statement about Culture**

(draft 7; Jan. 26, 2020)

Culture embodies the ability of people to share ideas and identities. It exists to be experienced, and in those experiences, it moves individuals to feel more connected among friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors.

As energy that catalyzes connectivity, culture needs space in which to grow, and the ideal caretakers of that space are artists and leaders (artists as people who create and leaders as people who make space for creations).

These artists and leaders skillfully repeat, regenerate, and remix traditions and beliefs, and through these acts of care, they clear barriers of fear, create channels of influence, and seed diversity. Their work of reinforcing culture is also shared with institutions and landmarks, which exists as accessible, anchoring hubs of connectivity.

Far away from these anchors, though—at the edges—culture is born and remade. Here, boundaries are fluid and practices of inclusion ignite discovery, imagination, and innovation.

Ultimately, whether near an anchor or edge, culture celebrates the collective and unexpected interactions of individuals that emergently shape the future.

While the culture of Washtenaw County—its anchors and caretakers—to some feels hidden, inaccessible, and hard to spot, CultureMakers are dedicated to being and creating beacons of connectivity in their community.

### **About CultureMakers**

Launched with the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, CultureMakers is a program for young leaders, predominantly of color, that aims to explore contemporary practices in the arts and shift dominant narratives about culture. The ideas that the group generates will shape CultureSource's approach to being a resource for creative and cultural expression in Southeast Michigan.