

## Out Town 2014 Application Comments

Art Menius spoke to Courtney Simmons from NEA at 3:40 PM on July 16, 2014

She expressed that they were surprised by how competitive the 2014 process proved with only 1 in 5 applications funded.

The Carrboro application did well in all major aspects and only needs a few tweaks.

Four different panelists, which she said was unusually high, complimented us a clean, concise, well written proposal with good work sample images. “The panel was very receptive to this application.”

Three panelists noted that Szostak Design was very impressive and that we were lucky to have Phil on our team.

“Modest but achievable budget”

The panel was impressed by our intention to use established performance standards and to take evaluation seriously.

We are strongly encouraged to reapply. Guidelines will be promulgated in September along with a new “storybook” on the web that will offer details of the 70 active OT projects.

### Negative comments

Most telling was lack of any comments at all about our letters of support. She says this suggested they were “ok, but did not engage the panelists.” She stressed using the letters of support as a way to get around the word limits in the narrative, that the letters should be an extension of the narrative. This suggests how involved the letter writers are. The letters of support, according to Courtney, would be the best place to explain how we have a great creative community that is threatened by gentrification and that the district planning is the best means to address this.

One panelist asked for more details and specifics about the kinds of marketing materials and tools we would employ and how we would “leverage those assets.”

We needed – as suggested above – more directly addressing gentrification and how the District would enhance equity and access to the arts for all. (Which connects to the recent Carrboro Plaza discussion.)

More about the unique nature of Carrboro’s situation as a creative community.

More about the interests and accomplishments of The ArtsCenter Board besides Phil and how they have the capacity to lead this project.