

Migration Redefined: Arts, Diaspora and Entrepreneurship in the 21st Century

Colleges/Partners:

IFAS Extension, HWCOE, CLAS, Center for Entrepreneurship, African Studies

Overview:

The population of the State of Florida is currently over 21 million and is projected to grow to nearly 26 million residents by 2030.¹ Over 20% of Florida’s residents are immigrants, and that percentage is projected to grow above the overall population growth rate. These Floridian residents are disproportionately likely to be entrepreneurs; as of 2015, according to the American Immigration Council, 381,117 immigrant business owners accounted for 30.7% of all self-employed Florida residents and generated \$5.6 Billion in business income. That same year, immigrants accounted for 61.6 % of business owners in the Miami/Fort Lauderdale/Miami Beach metropolitan area, 23.7% in the Orlando metro area, and 21.7% in the Tampa/St. Petersburg/Clearwater metropolitan area.² In 2014, immigrants in Florida earned \$96.6 Billion, with \$6.4 Billion going to state and local taxes and \$17 Billion to federal taxes.³

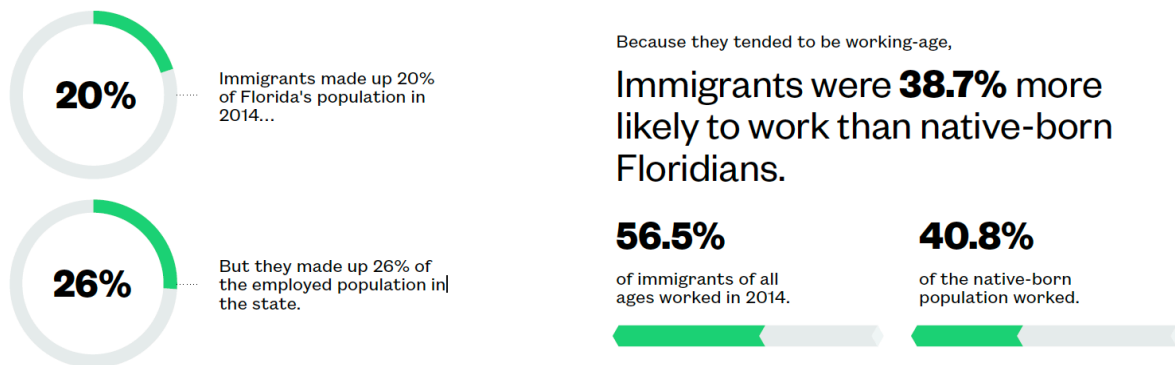


Figure 1: from “The Contributions of New Americans in Florida,” New American Economy

In parallel, Florida is a state in which the economic impact of arts and creative economy cannot be overstated; the arts and culture sector accounted for 3.8% of Florida’s GDP (\$33.4 Billion) in 2015, and employed 245,652 workers with an average salary rate of \$60,393 – over \$3,000 higher than the overall average rate for salaried positions in Florida.⁴

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. July 1, 2017. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fl>

² American Immigration Council. “Immigrants in Florida.” 10/4/2017 <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-florida>

³ New American Economy. “The Contributions of New Americans in Florida.” 8/2016. <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/nae-fl-report.pdf>

⁴ U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. “Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account, U.S. and States 2015. 3/6/2018. <http://www.bea.gov/news/2018/arts-and-cultural-production-satellite-account-us-and-states-2015>

The intersection of creative economy and migrant identity and entrepreneurial leadership is multifaceted in Florida; on one hand, a full 66.8% of Miami’s creative class identify as non-white.⁵ On the other hand, Florida’s arts and cultural economic infrastructure is in a relatively nascent stage at a time when the state is poised for significant growth from migratory and diasporic populations.

The historical record tells us that the creative production of people that arrive from afar can have profoundly stimulating effects on the growth and development of social and economic ecosystems. The influence of African and Latin music and dance innovations on what became known as American music and dance (Jazz, R&B, Hip Hop, Swing, Broadway etc) and their subsequent influence on world culture is obvious and cannot be overstated. The world-wide media giant that is the Disney Corporation is in no small part a phenomenon laced with the narratives, symbols, songs, and styles of intersecting cultural diasporas. Their most recent record-breaking release “Black Panther” is a clear example of the impact that engagement with the aesthetic and creative values of a cultural diaspora can have. The questions that UF is positioned to answer is how can we leverage this current moment and its possibilities; and how can we ensure that the value and profits generated by migrant and diaspora communities return to them to generate wealth and wellbeing for their communities and for the evolving social and cultural ecosystem as a whole?

Please describe your moonshot proposal briefly:

To address the lack of infrastructure for arts and cultural economy for migratory and diasporic communities in Florida and beyond, the University of Florida will be a hub of expertise to position migrant/diaspora communities’ artistic and creative production as cultural and economic engines. We will convene collaborating teams of artists/creatives whose work is connected along tributaries of cultural diaspora. We will support them with interdisciplinary experts in innovation, entrepreneurship, economics, policy, science and technology, social justice and more. We will train students prepared to work as cross disciplinary arts collaborators in the future of work within complex dynamic cultural landscapes.

Goals:

- **See** the migrant as the one who moves and also the one who stays while the world changes around them.
- **Center** members of migrant communities and their creative practices and products.
- **Work** at the intersection of cultural diaspora, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.
- **Recognize** our identity as a state and nation with a population fundamentally defined by migration of all kinds.
- **Identify** the historical and future power of sharing, fusing, and innovating with, an influx of new cultural materials.

⁵ Florida, Richard. “Mapping the Diversity of the Creative Class.” CityLab. 5/11/2017. <https://www.citylab.com/life/2017/05/mapping-the-diversity-of-the-creative-class/516171/>

Outcomes:

- **Launch** a new Center for Diaspora Arts and Entrepreneurship that will be an international hub for arts and social and economic development.
- **Make** new cultural products/works of art that produce value both within diaspora communities and in their broader cultural and economic contexts.
- **Research/ Propose/ Test/ Develop** solutions to problems associated with inequitable distributions of the benefits and profits of cultural appropriation.
- **Apply** successful methodologies for innovation and entrepreneurial invigoration of markets in contexts profoundly shifted by migration.
- **Build** local, national, and international networks within which to grow platforms for life sustaining cultural production in thriving economies.

Indicate why you believe your team is well positioned and staffed to tackle this (i.e. critical mass of faculty and students, track records, grants, etc.):

The College of the Arts is poised for leadership and distinction through several areas of existing strength. These include:

- Digital literacy and creative cognition skills that define the curriculum and research of the Digital Worlds Institute
- International leadership at the intersections of the Arts and health – both individual and community – at local, state, national and international levels through the Center for Arts in Medicine
- Nearly 25% of CoTA faculty from Graphic Design, Dance, Art History, Studio Art, Music, Ethnomusicology, and other disciplines are specifically focused on Latin American and African diasporic artistic forms, economies, and identities
- We will focus all hiring this year (15-20 faculty positions across the College of the Arts to an over-arching meta narrative that catalyzes a depth of expertise to support this moonshot agenda)
- Durable collaborative relationships with multiple migrant and diaspora communities in Gainesville.

UF Partners:

- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
 - Center for Latin Studies
 - Center for African Studies
 - Center for the Humanities in the Public Sphere
- College of Engineering
 - Block Chain economies (Computer Science)
 - Overlap with Digital Literacy Initiatives (Community Engagement/Design)
- IFAS Extension
 - Arts/Entrepreneurship/Digital Literacy programming in Florida communities
- Center for Entrepreneurship, College of Business

- UF INNOVATE

Indicate anticipated markers of success:

- UF alumni capable of working and thriving as artists in complex cultural contexts marked by migration, cultural diaspora
- Attraction of Major Donor support
- Successful procurement of foundation support
- Measurable improvement in economic success and wellness of partner diaspora communities over time
- Identifiable and durable state, national and international networks of partner diaspora communities

Indicate prospects for sustained funding (research grants, philanthropy, etc.):

An artist's roles in society and in higher education have expanded to include both the excellence of one's professional practice and the artist's capacity as a collaborative and community asset, an interdisciplinary resource, and an integrated, professional agent of social, physical, environmental, and economic change. Foundations, federal and state granting agencies, and corporate and individual supporters have responded to – and in some cases shaped – this expanded role of the artist, positioning themselves as vital partners in engaging the arts for social and economic good. The College of the Arts is a leader in securing support that does just that, primarily through the Center for the Arts in Medicine and the Digital Worlds Institute. Similarly, COTA's Moonshot would position the college's assets and expertise in the college to align more purposefully with major foundations that have transitioned their grantmaking priorities to support work that challenges inequality at the local and global levels and foregrounds community transformation and economic engagement. These include, among others, the Ford Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Surdna Foundation, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, and the Creative Placemaking track for the National Endowment for the Arts.

Operational Leader:

Our plan is to dedicate one of our preeminence hires this year to a director to lead the development of a center within which to converge the curricular, collaborative and external outreach activities of this project.