



Cultural Institutions
Working Group

Cultural Institutions and Y/OUR Climate Campaign 2020

Who We Are

The Boston Green Ribbon Commission Cultural Institutions Working Group comprises 40 diverse arts, educational, sports, and entertainment organizations that share the mission of driving awareness and action on climate issues on behalf of the sector, the City, and audiences. For members and more information see our [website](#).

Mission

The mission of the Boston Green Ribbon Commission (GRC) is to convene leaders from Boston's key sectors to support the outcomes of the City's [Climate Action Plan](#). The purpose of the GRC's Cultural Institutions Working Group is to support the City on climate action through arts, creativity, education, and facility energy efficiency and resilience.

Y/OUR Boston Climate & Culture Campaign

In Boston, as around the world, we have an [existential climate challenge](#). Science has enabled us to understand and predict its impacts, and we even have the technology to address it. What we need now is the heart, vision, and political will to make the changes in our City and our lives that will ensure a safe, healthy, and creative future.

Arts and culture have the power to open peoples' minds and foment social change, to help people see things they didn't see before, or to understand them in new ways. To support understanding and action around climate change, **in 2020 the GRC's Cultural Institutions Working Group, in partnership with the City of Boston, will launch the Y/OUR experience, a branded campaign that encourages all cultural venues across the City to participate in climate programming of their own choosing.** The goal is to encourage a sustained, culturally-based focus on visioning and achieving a climate-safe future. Boston's cultural sector – the natural leader of this important work – is all in.

The City of Boston aims to be carbon neutral by 2050, as well as resilient to the greatest climate threats, so our City is safe, resilient, and free of carbon pollution. These goals apply to all parts of the City, protecting and elevating all people, including and especially the most vulnerable. We are committed to social and environmental justice. Mayor Walsh asked for help from our sector community, and he asked us to be creative. Y/OUR brand framework is designed to be inclusive of all the cultural institutions and organizations in our City.

The Y/OUR experience goal is to build climate literacy and collectively envision our desired future. Y/OUR can and will include new creative work, exhibits, education programs, outreach, marketing communication, programming, and more – related to climate. It will open minds and encourage positive change here in Boston.

greenribboncommission.org

Becoming part of Y/OUR

Y/OUR is open to all organizations that want to participate. We ask for three basic commitments: 1) that you commit to meaningful programming, 2) that you use and promote the Y/OUR brand, and 3) that your organization initiates the creation of a climate action plan, if you don't have one already.*

The Green Ribbon Commission Cultural Institutions Working Group will provide branding collateral and guidelines, technical expertise on climate issues, access to a network of climate-engaged organizations, and media and promotional support for all Y/OUR participants.

Y/OUR Activation

The Pilot Phase of Y/OUR will kick off in the Spring of 2020 and run through the Fall, when we will hold a major celebratory event. Key participating organizations are The Museum of Fine Arts, the Boston Red Sox, the New England Aquarium, and the Museum of Science – four of the best-loved and most widely-known Boston organizations. These four are planning to link programming, events, exhibits, marketing, and communications to Y/OUR Climate themes and messages, providing a concentrated push to Y/OUR brand during that period. Many other GRC Cultural Institution members will participate, and we welcome all who wish to join.

It is not necessary to plan new programming to participate in Y/OUR Climate Campaign 2020 (although you are welcome to do so!). When they consider upcoming programming through a climate lens, many institutions see natural connections that can be brought forward through messaging and interpretive material.

We hope this six month period will be the beginning, not the end, of climate programming and use of Y/OUR branding. After all, we have a lot of climate work to do in Y/OUR Boston between now and 2050! We welcome the participation of all kinds of cultural, sports, entertainment, and arts organizations. Help us reach as many people as possible!

Events

Spring anchoring events include an exciting kick-off on Earth Day at Fenway, with messaging focused on Y/OUR Future Boston (exact wording TBD), media, the Mayor (TBC) and the leaders of all participating cultural institutions on the field for an impactful message of the collective desire to help create positive change in our City.

The Fall celebratory anchoring event is envisioned as a multi-media concert or rally with artists, musicians, poets, and other cultural voices creating a public "vision-in."

Branding

The GRC is supporting the development of branding collateral, messaging, and a web presence for Y/OUR.

Marketing & Promotion

The GRC is currently seeking a creative agency to develop a core a marketing and promotion plan. As part of this effort we will:

- Work with the City of Boston to identify opportunities to promote Y/OUR through existing channels
- Develop an earned media strategy
- Identify one or more media partners

Each participating organization is asked to provide support through its existing marketing and promotional budget and activities, by deploying Y/OUR brand and messaging in connection with their climate programming.

Success

There's no question about it; building climate will is a long game. Mayor Walsh and the City Environment Department have laid out clear 2050 goals for resilience and carbon-neutrality. How will we know if we're on track?

The GRC is currently exploring opportunities to measure long-term attitudinal changes in our perceptions and willingness to act on climate initiatives in Boston. In addition, each participating cultural organization will be developing their own Climate Action Plan, driving the sector's fossil-based energy use down and resilience levels up!

But the City and its institutions can't succeed if the people of Boston don't support them. Communications research shows that cultural organizations are highly trusted. When people experience content related to climate change in new and innovative ways from non-traditional authorities and voices, they will feel empowered to get involved and make necessary changes, both political and personal. Collaborative messaging and action will scale the impact, leading to a more informed, prepared, and resilient Boston!

* An organizational climate action plan is a guidance document that sets goals for a) carbon reduction (through energy efficiency and clean energy procurement) and b) resilience to anticipated Boston climate impacts: sea level rise, freshwater flooding, and heat. The plan should be consistent with the targets and goals of the Boston Climate Action Plan 2019, but it will also be nuanced to the particular needs of the institution. The GRC's Cultural Institutions Working Group Energy & Resilience Task Force is holding workshops and developing guidance materials for the creation of cultural institution climate action plans. In addition, we offer board-level presentations from senior GRC leaders and staff for any institution that would like leadership orientation.