# Equity Mapping Indiana's Arts Ecosystem

*July 2022*

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# Background

*Crucial to a more equitable grantmaking structure, it is vital for the Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) to understand the role and relationships held between the IAC and its constituencies.*

*Included are the multitude of artists; arts, education, and civic organizations; creative communities; funders; and partners who make up the greater Indiana Arts ecosystem.*

## Equity mapping provided:

- Understanding and identification of how equity/inequity shows up in the arts ecosystem in Indiana

- Understanding of how power/resources are flowing between different stakeholders in the system and the inequitable structures and practices, intentionally or unintentionally, concentrate power and resources (e.g., influence, money, data, etc.).

# Framing of Power

"Power is a part of Equity" and for participants, the **framing of power is a relational concept.** Inequitable structures and practices have traditionally contributed to specific groups concentrating resources (i.e., money, data, etc.) and influencing broader decisions and attitudes across the ecosystem.

According to Cindy Suarez's Power Manual:
*"Power is, first of all, relational. It operates in relationships of inequality where we seek advantage and so is intentional. [...] Power is not about the rule of law, institutions, society, or the state. These are simply [...] artifacts, that result from past power-laden interactions, or confrontations."*

Suarez, C. (2018). The Power Manual: How to Master Complex Power Dynamics. New Society Publishers.

# Participant Overview

Three Community Sessions: June 14, 16, and 20, 2022

**59**

**Participants**

45.8% Representatives of Arts Organizations or Providers

16.7% Individual Artists

14.6% Arts Supporters/Advocates

76.3% Past Grantees of IAC

# Equity Mapping Sessions

Participants participated in facilitated small group conversations to generate ideas and reflections for the maps. Participants chose one of three key areas:

**1**

**INFLUENCE**

Exploring power as an influential or social capital

**2**

**MONEY**

Exploring power as a monetary or financial capital

**3**

**DATA | KNOWLEDGE | INFORMATION**

Exploring power as a data-driven or knowledge capital

# Critical Questions

From the discussions, a multitude of findings emerged to help explore critical questions like:

- How do power dynamics inform the production of arts activities in Indiana?
- What stakeholder relationships are more or less resourced than others?
- How do IAC constituents interpret systems of power and resource allocation?
- What sentiments and opinions frame the context of collaborative relationships?

# Next Steps for IAC

Overall, the power mapping exercise revealed important insights and assumptions from participants in attendance that will inform further work with IAC. These considerations are crucial as IAC continues to consider the diversity and additional nuance embedded in its service population, with particular importance on naming (and specializing responses toward) critical social and cultural groups in the state.

A critical finding was the importance and value of recognizing and communicating the relational aspects of power dynamics to support addressing how inequities manifest in the Indiana Arts ecosystem.

# EQUITY MAPPING LEARNINGS

- Influence
- Money
- Data/Knowledge/ Information
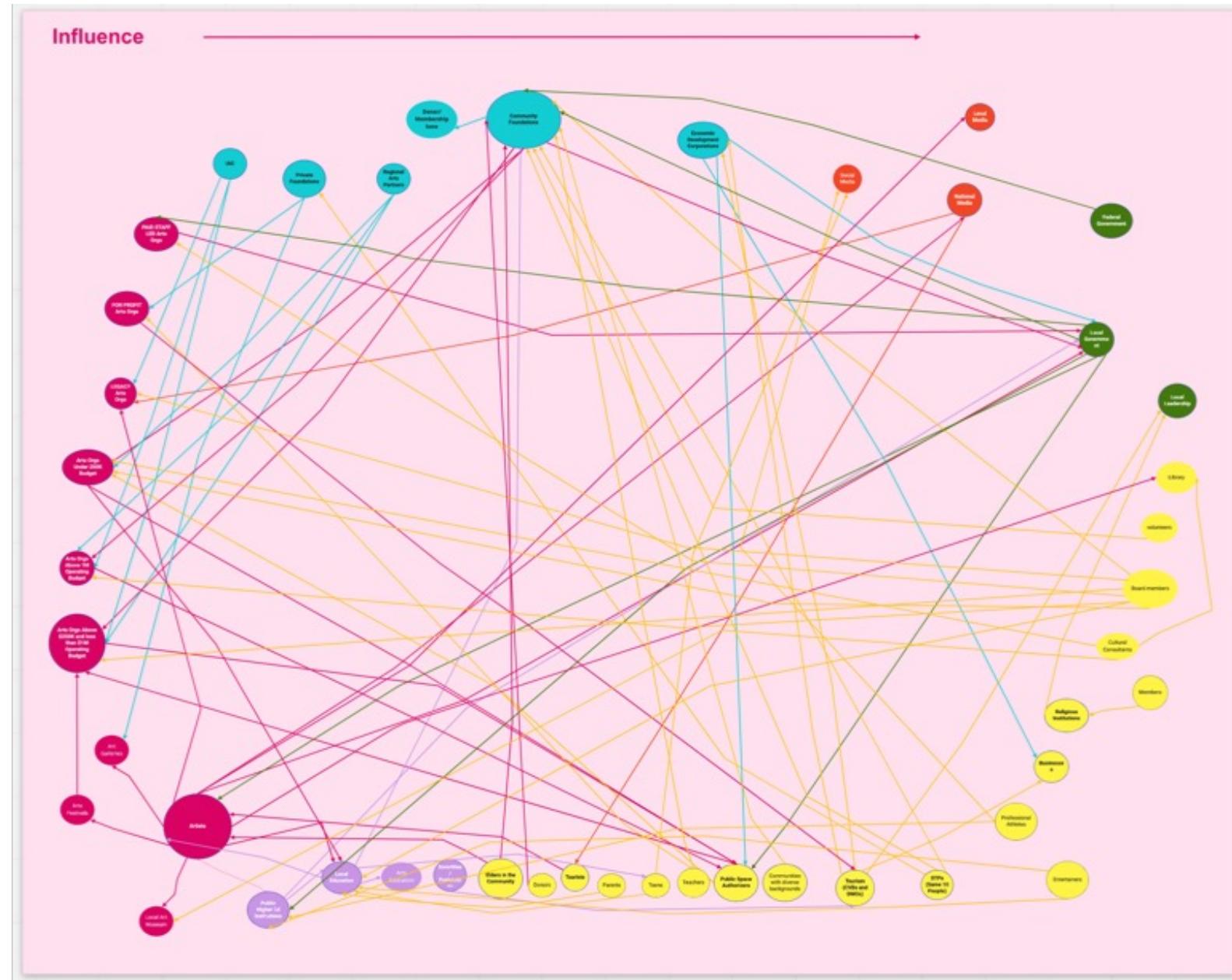
*"influence is power"*

Participants explored the idea that "influence is power" and discussed how power shows up in the flow of influence between individuals and organizations. Conversations focused on thought leadership, influential relationships, and priority-setting strategies.

## Thought Leadership

- ❖ Traditional flows of influence are shifting toward more significant equity in the digital landscape.
- ❖ Influential stakeholders often possess significant financial assets and implicit authority.
- ❖ Accessible public spaces deeply influence project planning and capacity, especially in rural areas.

## Influential Relationships

- ❖ Entrepreneurship and tourism are driving forward new resources in the arts economy.
- ❖ Local government and artists serve a complementary relationship of influence that benefits the ecosystem.
- ❖ Influence can show up in problematic ways that fail to center community input.
- ❖ The educational system's influence creates frustration and innovation for stakeholders that stems from limited opportunities and service gaps.

## Priority-Setting Strategies

- ❖ Traditional flows of influence are shifting toward more significant equity in the digital landscape.
- ❖ Powerful relationships between stakeholders foster interdependent influences.
- ❖ The social and political influence can make stakeholder accountability more pervasive as influence is more challenging to define, and understanding relational flows are more difficult to track.
- ❖ Arts organizations expressed concern about their ability to convey the value of their sector to elected officials, instead prioritizing opportunities for direct engagement between artists and government.
- ❖ Stakeholder decision-making may not always reflect the target service population.
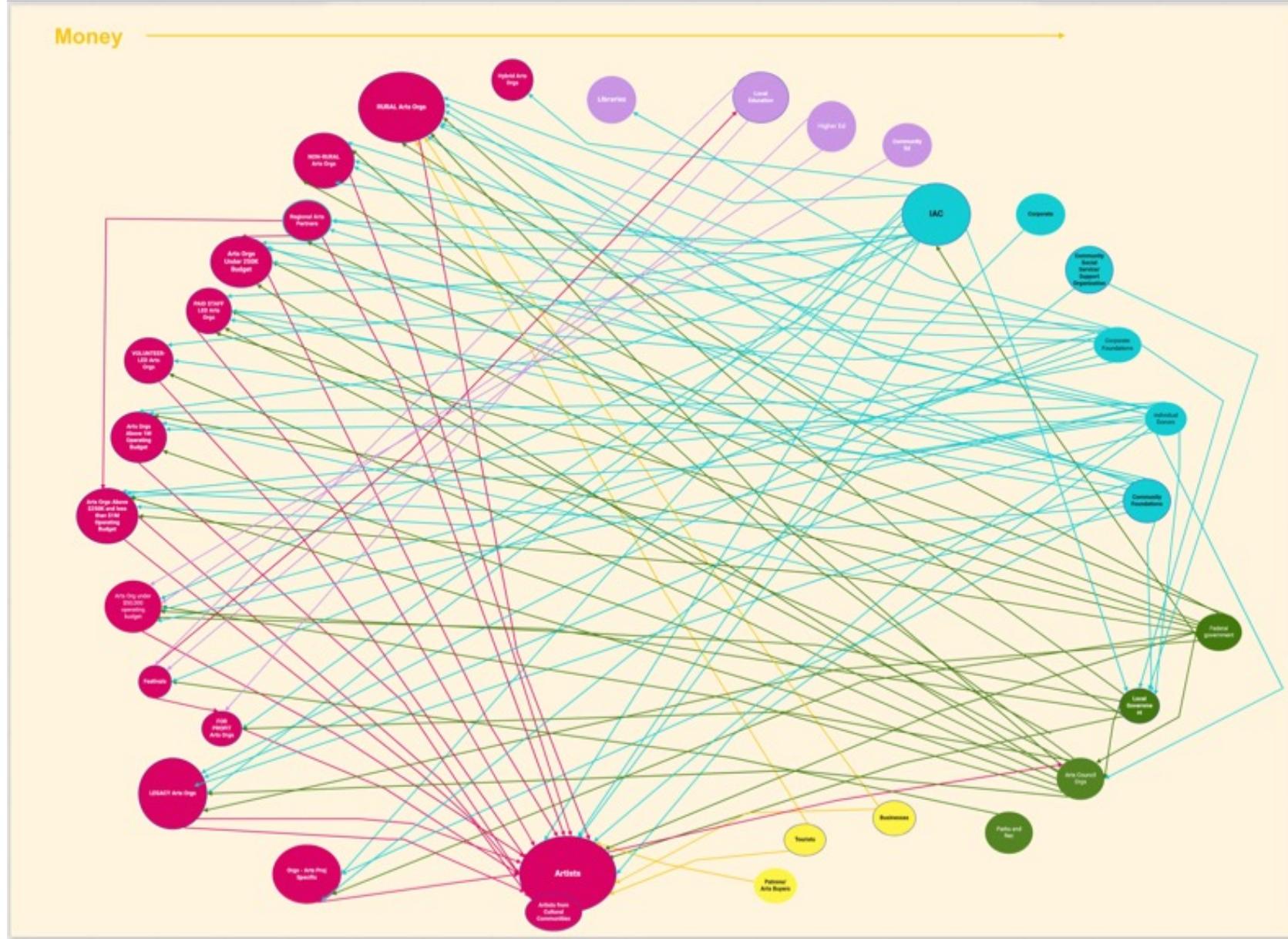
*"Money is power"*

Participants explored the idea that "money is power" and discussed how power shows up in the flow of money between individuals and organizations. Conversations focused on grantmaking, economic relationships, and growing financial assets.

## Grantmaking

❖ Grant-seeking processes can be a disproportionate burden for smaller organizations.
❖ Rural stakeholders have been resilient amidst an inequitable funding landscape.
❖ Restrictive funding guidelines can prioritize the needs of funders over applicants.
❖ The financial burden of unsuccessful grant-seeking efforts is unsustainable.

## Economic Relationships

❖ The private sector undervalues the impact of Indiana's Arts ecosystem as an economic catalyst.
❖ Local government and K-12 systems are integral in sustaining economic opportunities for the creative economy.
❖ Pass-through funders alleviate challenges in navigating federal grant opportunities.
❖ Conventional economic relationships for artists from organic audience development have a natural separation from institutional funding models.

## Growing Financial Assets

❖ Many monetary relationships do not ultimately translate into large amounts of funding received.
❖ The financial ecosystem concentrates on fund redistribution and only includes a few entry points for major funds.
❖ Conventional models of earned income are still the primary method for funding art activities.
❖ In-kind support and organizational discounts are undervalued resources in the state ecosystem.
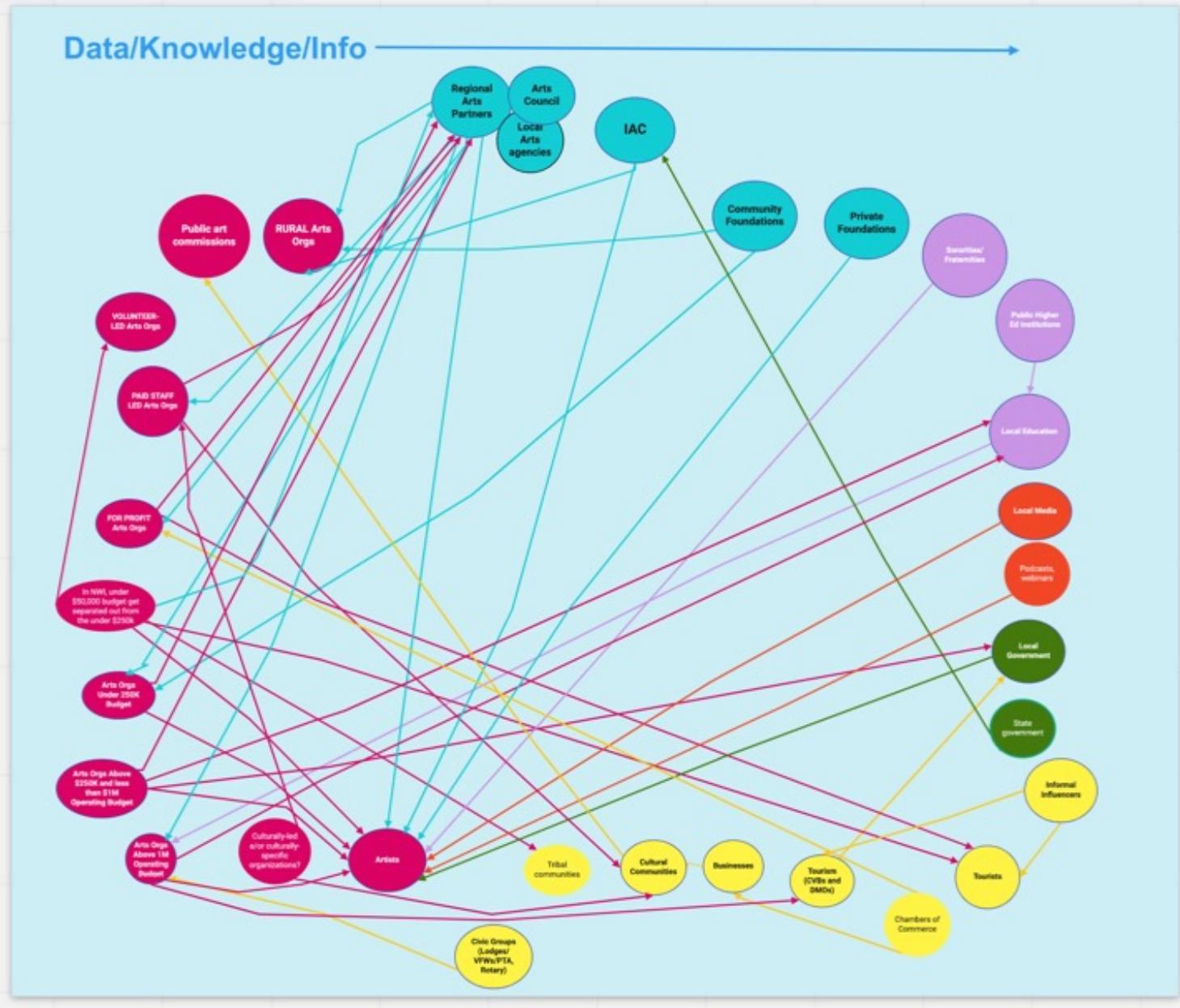
*"knowledge is power"*

Participants explored the idea that "knowledge is power" and discussed how power shows up in the flow of information and data between individuals and organizations. Conversations focused on topics of knowledge-building, data access, and community narratives.
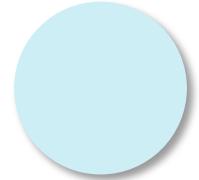
## Knowledge-Building

❖ Artists develop knowledge through various individual and collective practices, which may operate in isolation from institutional data-sharing practices.
❖ The intersection of sector learning and data collection can present challenges when working with vulnerable populations.
❖ Data circulates and is used across many stakeholders, making it difficult to validate or control.

## Data Access

❖ Knowledge sharing is inconsistent among regional state partners, especially under-resourced groups.
❖ Organizations without nonprofit status cause restrictions from traditional information channels.

## Community Narratives

❖ Stakeholder groups with multifaceted roles in the community can skew the reception of data and knowledge flows based on their audience.
❖ Data can be biased depending on who is part of the data collection process.

# Equity Mapping Full Report

## Read the full report:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iOjYL35hI_kSwUE8A3aS5wqD443N4PDa/view?usp=sharing