

As appointed leaders, chairs and council members are **champions** for the arts and **ambassadors** for their state arts agencies. This unique—and influential—role builds public awareness of the arts and fosters greater understanding of state arts agencies. Your ambassadorial job is one of the building blocks of effective advocacy. It lays a strong, broad foundation of good will and good information to support future resource growth and policy development for the arts. Here are some practical ways to get started.

Speak Out

Identify yourself as an arts council representative in your community, throughout your own network and in informal settings. Some people you meet may not know what a state arts agency is—you can help them learn. Also, the simple act of a friendly person identifying him- or herself as a council member helps to demystify public support for the arts and creates open lines of communication between councils and the citizens they serve.



Be a conduit for good stories and good news. Spread the word about all the great things the arts achieve in your state. Share information about arts events and inspiring stories about the arts (and circulate the latest news from your state arts agency) in person, via social media and through e-mail.

Let your voice be heard. Write an op-ed in your local paper, a blog or a short newsletter article about the importance of the arts—and your state arts agency—to your community. Speak from the heart. Ask your state arts agency's staff for facts and figures to make your story even more persuasive.

Reach Out

Visit with grantees to congratulate them on their awards, to encourage their good work, and to learn more about their needs and aspirations.

Introduce yourself to your legislative delegation. If you don't already know your state and federal house and senate members, get acquainted. You do not need to ask for anything during an initial visit or phone call. Instead, start by thanking them for their public service, letting them know that the arts are important to their constituents, and offering to be a resource for information, ideas or feedback in the future.

Attend forums on issues other than the arts. Take note of trends that may affect the arts, and offer suggestions for how the arts can connect to what the



group is trying to achieve. Your visible presence at town hall meetings, civic events, education meetings or business gatherings sends a powerful message about how the arts are integral to all aspects of community life.

Stay Informed

Start a file of talking points. Your state arts agency staff can provide information on grants awarded, bullet points on the benefits of the arts and succinct descriptions of programs the agency offers. Keep this information on hand, and add to it when you see new articles or stories that you might want to reference in the future.

Inquire. Don't be shy! If you are curious about some aspect of state arts agency services, ask your state arts agency or reach out directly to NASAA. Our research staff is dedicated to answering your questions.

Tune in to the latest news from your state arts agency, your state arts advocacy organization and NASAA. E-mail NASAA Communications Manager [Sue Struve](mailto:Sue.Struve) to get connected.

Useful Resources

[Why Should Government Support the Arts?](#) This handy policy brief answers frequently asked questions about public support for the arts and presents powerful case-making research.

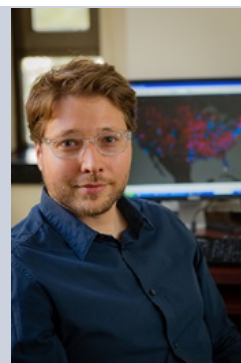
[Advocacy and Lobbying: Speaking up for the Arts](#) After explaining the difference between advocacy and lobbying, this guide addresses some common myths and misconceptions helpful to board members.

Ask NASAA!

NASAA's research team is happy to answer common questions about state arts agency funding, grant programs, advocacy talking points and other topics. For help, contact:

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NASAA is the membership organization serving America's state and jurisdictional arts agencies. We are a national, not-for-profit, nonpartisan association that provides advocacy, research, training and networking services to state arts agencies and their constituents. Our work is driven by a strong belief that the arts are essential to a thriving democracy and that the public, private and nonprofit sectors each have a vital role to play in achieving that vision. To learn more, visit www.nasaa-arts.org.

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