

CULTURAL EXCHANGES THROUGH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STRENGTHENING TIES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD

ACTION NEEDED

We urge Congress to:

- Increase funding by \$10 million for the Cultural Programs Division of the State Department's Office of Citizen Exchanges in the FY 2010 State and Foreign Operations appropriations bill. This increase should be designated for the Professional Exchanges and Cultural Grant Program and the Performing Arts Initiative.
- Direct the State Department to: 1) make information on projects funded through these programs readily available to the public; 2) encourage broad participation in its grant program in support of artistic and cultural exchanges with an emphasis on simplifying the application process; and 3) recruit applicants widely to represent best the opportunities available for freedom of thought and expression in a democratic society.
- Direct the State Department to increase operational capacity within the Cultural Programs Division to strengthen its ability to process and oversee grants and programs.

Annual Budget for Cultural Programs Division in Millions, FY 2003 to present

Fiscal Year	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09
Cultural Programs Division	2.7	3	4.3	4.7	9.3	8.4	TBA

TALKING POINTS

- ***Policymakers agree that cultural exchange is critical to our security efforts around the world.***
 - President Barack Obama's arts policy platform states: "Opening America's doors to students and professional artists provides the kind of two-way cultural understanding that can break down the barriers that feed hatred and fear."
 - Secretary Hillary Clinton in her Confirmation Hearing Statement explained that her proposal of using "smart power" includes culture as a valuable diplomatic tool.
 - Public Diplomacy is among the Government Accountability Office's list of 13 urgent issues that require the attention of President Barack Obama.
 - Vice President and former Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Joe Biden has stated that "cultural exchanges can help erase borders of hostility and build a stronger foundation of broader and deeper understanding among peoples."
- ***Increased funding and operational capacity for the Cultural Programs Division will strengthen exchange and collaboration in the arts and cultural fields that build bridges among people of different countries, cultures, and faiths.***
 - A May 2006 evaluation of the State Department's Jazz Ambassadors Program found that more than 90 percent of embassy staff agreed that the program is effective in extending the reach of traditional diplomacy and providing alternative venues for policy dialogue.
 - A July 2005 assessment of U.S. state-based international exchange programs sponsored by the State Department revealed that among survey respondents, 98 percent of foreign exchange visitors gained a better understanding of the United States and its people. Similarly, 87 percent of foreign exchange hosts reported gaining knowledge about the country and culture of the foreign exchange visitor.
- ***A Congressional Research Service report declares exchanges are a key public diplomacy tool.***
 - In a September 2005 review of 29 studies on public diplomacy compiled by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, the most popular recommendation for public diplomacy reform was to increase U.S. exchange programs.
- ***International cultural exchange carries an economic benefit.***
 - According to a report by the National Governors Association, "How States Are Using Arts and Culture to Strengthen Their Global Trade Development," state governments find that incorporating arts and cultural exchanges in their international trade and business development serves to expand trading relationships with other nations and open markets abroad as a complement to more traditional efforts to generate exports.

(continued)

BACKGROUND

Funding for cultural exchange has never recovered from the elimination of the former United States Information Agency (USIA) and the USIA's Arts America Program. State Department cultural exchange program funds are climbing from a low point of only \$2 million a few years ago, to an estimated \$11 million in FY 2008. An increased appropriation would expand the State Department's ability to foster mutual understanding between the United States and other countries.

The ECA Bureau is responsible for the public diplomacy activities of the United States, including international cultural exchange programs. The Cultural Programs Division is the principal Department of State element focused on cultural diplomacy. The Division's activities include grant opportunities to U.S. nonprofits for cultural exchange activities; residency, mentoring, and training programs; programs that are carried out overseas by or under the sponsorship of U.S. Embassy public diplomacy offices; and presentations at major international visual arts exhibitions and cultural centers. The Professional Exchanges and Cultural Grant Program provides grants to U.S. nonprofit organizations to carry out exchange programs in the arts, arts management, and arts education. The Performing Arts Initiative provides financial support to U.S. Embassies for presentations of American performing art and artists.

2008 Grant Recipients

American Association of Museums

2008 Museums and Community Collaborations Abroad Program

Bronx Museum of the Arts

Fellowships in the Visual Arts, Film and Architecture and Urban Design

Brooklyn Academy of Music

DanceMotion USA

Carnegie Hall Society

Distance Learning Cultural Exchange

Institutions for Training and Development (ITD)

Visual Arts Exchange Program

Jazz at Lincoln Center, Inc.

The Rhythm Road- American Music Abroad Program

John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Cultural Visitor & Fellows Mentoring Programs

Southwest Chamber Music Society

The Ascending Dragon Cultural Exchange: Southwest Chamber Music and the Vietnam National Academy of Music

University Film & Video Association

American Documentaries Showcase

University of Iowa

International Writing Program (IWP)

WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc. (WSOS)

Visual Arts Exchange Program

The Cultural Programs Division has also funded traveling American art exhibits to U.S. Missions. Recent exhibitions include the *American Roadside Architecture* and *Landmarks of New York and After the Flood*. Other exhibitions touring in 2009 are *Picturing America* (in partnership with the National Endowment for the Humanities) and *JAM Session: Jazz Ambassadors* (in partnership with Meridian International).