

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

# **State Arts Agency Funding and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act**

### **What is the source of state arts agencies' ARRA funding?**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) included the arts among the industries that would be supported with federal economic stimulus dollars. This legislation allocated \$50 million to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to “preserve jobs in the non-profit arts sector threatened by declines in philanthropic and other support” during the recession. Of this \$50 million, approximately \$30 million will be distributed via direct [NEA grants](#) and approximately \$20 million has been allocated to state arts agencies and regional arts organizations for distribution at the state and local levels.

### **Why did 40% go to states and regions?**

Drawing on their successful track record as grant makers and technical assistance providers, as well as their detailed knowledge of the current arts environment, state arts agencies can move quickly to distribute the funding where it will make a meaningful impact. Federal law requires 40% of all NEA grant funding to be allocated to state arts agencies and their regional consortia. This policy ensures the broadest possible reach of public arts dollars and leverages additional arts investments at the state and local levels.

### **What will states' ARRA funding support?**

The legislation requires the NEA and states to focus on the preservation of jobs in the nonprofit arts sector, specifically positions that are at risk of elimination or reduced hours due to the economic downturn. States will use ARRA dollars to award grants that support nonprofit arts organization salaries and/or fees for previously engaged artists and/or contractual personnel. These one-time grants are intended to act as a bridge of support to help arts organizations weather the immediate economic storm, continuing to fulfill their artistic and public service goals.

ARRA funding to states will support a wide variety of occupations including artists, administrators, technicians, art teachers, designers and many other creative industry workers. Non-matching grant awards will take into account the excellence of the applicant's work, the capacity of the organization to meet accountability standards, and the importance of the job to the organization's mission and ability to serve the public. Underserved populations are

especially vulnerable during economic downturns, and each state arts agency will also be working to ensure that ARRA funding reaches communities in acute economic distress as well as organizations that serve rural areas, at-risk youth, seniors and the disabled.

### **What steps are being taken to ensure that the funds will be put to good use?**

ARRA funding will be heavily scrutinized by citizens and elected officials, all of whom expect the dollars to be used accountably. In order to meet strict [federal standards](#), state arts agencies will ensure the thorough, impartial review of applications for funding and will require special reporting and financial controls by grantees. Most state arts agencies also will require ARRA applicants to be recent recipients of state arts agency grants. This policy not only will ensure speedy distribution of funding, but also will mirror the NEA's practice of "obligating funds to previous award recipients with the demonstrated ability to deliver the results and accountability objectives."

### **Where can I learn more information about the availability of ARRA funding in my area?**

The NEA, states, regions and some local arts agencies all will be distributing ARRA grant dollars. For more information, visit the [Recovery](#) section of the NEA's Web site or consult your state or regional arts agency. A convenient [directory](#) of all states and regions – including Web sites and contact information – is available via the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies [Web site](#).

### **Is the NEA the only source of recovery funding for the arts?**

No. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act includes a number of funding opportunities for artists and arts organizations. These include opportunities in the areas of education, rural assistance, community development and transportation. Most of the decisions regarding distribution of the funds will be made at the state and local government levels. To learn more, consult NASAA's summary of [Arts Opportunities in the Economic Stimulus Package](#).

To learn more about public funding for the arts and the work of state arts agencies, contact:

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