

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

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State Policies & Programs Addressing Diversity

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As stewards of public funds and servants of public interest, government arts agencies hold a special responsibility to address diversity, equity and inclusion. State arts agencies (SAAs) use a variety of strategies to achieve this, such as special programs and initiatives with equity goals, policies setting high expectations for diversity, and management practices foregrounding the importance of inclusion and respect for cultural differences.

Though SAAs have a long-standing commitment to diversity—as they have demonstrated throughout the 50-year history of the state arts agency movement—the accelerating changes in our nation's demographics are prompting many agencies to reexamine their work and its reach. To assist these efforts, this catalogue shares a wide range of related policies and practices SAAs currently employ. While it does not cover every way each SAA addresses diversity, equity and inclusion, it does offer a curated collection of examples organized by strategic focus, enabling reflection on useful ways to foster inclusion and equity in the arts.

NASAA developed this document from research it conducted in 2015 and 2016. NASAA reviewed SAAs' grants data, websites, grant and nongrant program guidelines, National Endowment for the Arts Partnership Agreement applications, policy documents (such as enabling legislation, strategic plans and performance metrics), and sources of governance information (such as council bylaws and council member handbooks). NASAA also communicated directly with staff from 19 state arts agencies to learn more about their grant-making data, constituent outreach efforts and additional diversity policies and practices.

NASAA is keen to learn more about SAA diversity efforts as they evolve. This catalogue reflects those in effect when NASAA conducted its research. If your agency has a new policy, program or service—or is updating an existing one—please let us know. Contact NASAA Research Manager [Paul Pietsch](#).

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Agency Policy & Planning ([back to Table of Contents](#))

Policy statements not only set the goals for and guide the day-to-day work of state arts agencies, but also signal to stakeholders that the ideals of equity and inclusion are central to public support for the arts. Nearly every SAA addresses diversity through a policy statement, which may be developed through state legislation, strategic planning and other means.

VALUE OR VISION STATEMENTS ([back to TOC](#))

Every SAA has a set of foundational beliefs supporting its goals, programs and procedures. These policies, often referred to as vision or value statements, are a common vehicle for expressing commitment to diversity. Examples include the following.

Alaska State Council on the Arts—A core value of ASCA's [2011-2016 Strategic Plan](#) is "appreciating and respecting the diversity of Alaska, where nearly 100 languages are spoken in a state with fewer than 700,000 citizens."

Connecticut Office of the Arts—COA's [Strategic Plan 2017-2021](#) prominently features an equity, inclusion and access statement. The statement reads in part: "Equity, inclusion and access involving all populations are critical to the vitality of our neighborhoods, towns, and cities. We acknowledge that there is much work to do in this area. We are committed to supporting and fully engaging diverse members of our communities in arts policy, practice, and decision making.... The Connecticut Office of the Arts will insist upon using the lenses of relevance, equity, access, diversity, and inclusion to guide programmatic and investment decisions within a framework of artistic excellence." The statement goes on to define and describe COA's commitment to each of these terms.

Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts—According to a core value of its [Strategic Plan 2013-2017](#), HSFCFA celebrates and emphasizes the state's cultural richness and diversity in all its programs, initiatives and acquisitions.

Illinois Arts Council Agency—A guiding principle of IACA's [Strategic Plan 2013-18](#) is "unity in diversity." The principle states: "The arts are not practiced in isolation. The Illinois Arts Council Agency promotes unity among diverse communities. Differences shared create unique mosaics; they enrich the lives of Illinoisans."

Kentucky Arts Council—Diversity is one of KAC's four main [values](#). KAC asserts that "arts programs and services should be accessible to all people of the Commonwealth." KAC defines communities not only by geographic boundaries but also by factors of commonality such as "occupation, recreation, religion, ethnicity, belief, etc."

New York State Council on the Arts—As NYSCA explains in its [values statement](#), "Every citizen of New York State can have a meaningful connection to creativity and every community has a right to cultural self-determination. The Council is also committed to make the arts accessible to all the citizens of New York State. We aim to support worthy artistic and cultural activities that serve traditionally underserved communities or populations... [including those that are] racially or culturally diverse...."

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts—According to its [diversity statement](#), "RISCA embraces a proactive approach to diversity as essential to our role as a state agency and as a promoter and supporter of the arts in Rhode Island. In building and serving diverse audiences, RISCA affirms and supports the diversity of persons and ideas both within the organization and throughout the state." The statement sets goals such as making RISCA's council more diverse; engaging the challenges constituents face as "they strive for greater inclusion and diversity in their projects and programs"; and "developing, supporting, and providing programs that both celebrate and serve diverse populations, groups, cultures, and geographic areas into the state."

Virginia Commission for the Arts—One of VCA's values, expressed in its [2013-2015 Strategic Plan](#), is that the arts "provide insight, empathy and understanding of diverse people, customs and expressions that bridge differences and make a coherent whole out of many disparate parts."

Washington State Arts Commission—The values statement of ArtsWA's [Strategic Plan Framework for FY 2017-2021](#) affirms the agency's belief in the "arts as a catalyst for inclusiveness, social equity, and racial justice." The statement continues:

- "All Washingtonians should have access to and engagement with the arts.
- The arts create social bonds and amplify voices across all populations.
- We seek diversity of perspectives and backgrounds in our committees, staff, and board.
- We support diverse forms of artistic expression."

GOVERNANCE ([back to TOC](#))

The governing bodies of SAAs provide especially effective leadership when they are informed by and reflective of a variety of perspectives, experiences and backgrounds. As a result, a common SAA aspiration is to have council member diversity. In a number of states, this is realized through statutory policies addressing council composition. Here are a few examples.

California Arts Council—In compliance with [Section 8751](#) of state statute, the governor gives consideration to various "ethnic and geographic parts of the state" when making council member appointments. [Section 8752](#), meanwhile, directs the Council to hold its meetings "in various places throughout the state so as to encourage broad and diverse attendance."

Georgia Council for the Arts—[Section 50-12-22](#) of the Georgia Code says that council members should reflect "a balanced representation of the entire state, accounting for, but not limited to, minority and ethnic groups...." When appointing council members, the governor is to consider recommendations made by ethnic-group stakeholders.

Louisiana Division of the Arts—Council membership, according to [Section 891](#) of state statute, is to be "balanced and representative of the state's arts community, including minority and ethnic groups, practicing artists, artistic disciplines, large and small arts organizations, and local arts councils."

Montana Arts Council—As a matter of practice, but not state regulation, MAC aims to include a least one American Indian on its [council](#).

Wisconsin Arts Board—Even though state statute does not require it, WAB aspires for board membership that is at least 20% minority. The governor appoints board members.

STAFFING ([back to TOC](#))

State arts agencies are required to comply with federal civil rights statutes prohibiting discrimination in various forms. SAAs also must adhere to similar state statutes and regulations. Some SAAs, including those listed below, take additional steps to increase the diversity of their staff or to dedicate specific staff positions to promoting equity, accessibility and/or inclusion.

Delaware Division of the Arts—The state of Delaware requires diversity training for all state employees sitting on interview panels.

Louisiana Division of the Arts—In response to a principle of governing set by former Lieutenant Governor Mitch Landrieu—"diversity is a strength, not a weakness"—LDOA addressed diversity in its hiring practices and staff development. LDOA's efforts to these ends benefited from the work of its parent agency, the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, which implemented a diversity-focused staff recruitment and support policy and also provided diversity education to supervisors.

Minnesota State Arts Board—Every year, MSAB hires four people to provide outreach and technical assistance to artists and arts organizations in diverse communities. They engage American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Native Hawai'ian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latino communities.

Montana Arts Council—MAC staff participate in [Tribal Relations Trainings](#) facilitated by the Montana Office of Indian Affairs.

Ohio Arts Council—OAC has an [Affirmative Action Plan](#) that describes its equal employment opportunity (EEO) policy and program, sexual harassment policy, antidiscrimination policy and Americans with Disabilities Act policy. The plan designates an OAC staff member as the agency's EEO officer.

Oregon Arts Commission—The OAC's executive director is responsible, according to the position's job description, for recognizing the "value of individual and cultural differences," structuring "activity in their unit to promote and foster a diverse workforce" and working toward "achieving the agency's affirmative action objectives and goals."

Tennessee Arts Commission—TAC, per [Section 4-20-107](#) of state code, is required to employ a full-time staff member to "identify the traditionally underserved and underrepresented ethnic minority...artists and arts organizations" and to undertake activities "to assure equitable participation by the traditionally underserved and underrepresented ethnic minority...artists and arts organizations."

A Note about Language

There are many different ways of defining and expressing ideas around identity, equity and inclusion. Throughout this document, NASAA has retained the wording found in original statutes or policy documents, many of which were enacted decades ago. While recognizing that words are important—and sometimes evocative—readers are encouraged to consider the overall intent of the policies and the historical context in which they originated.

STRATEGIC PLANS ([back to TOC](#))

Every SAA has a strategic plan as a matter of sound organizational practice as well as compliance with the funding requirements of the National Endowment for the Arts. Some SAAs articulate their

commitment to diversity in these plans through specific goals, objectives and/or strategies. Here are some examples.

Alabama State Council on the Arts—One goal of ASCA's [Strategic Plan 2013](#) is to "support multi-cultural artistic expression." The plan's objectives include expanding the diversity of arts leadership, providing financial incentives to arts organizations that present "ethnically diverse work," reevaluating grant guidelines in order "to broaden support for ethnically diverse groups and multi-cultural artistic expression," and facilitating "international cultural exchange where...the state's audiences and artists can experience diverse world cultures."

Arkansas Arts Council—One objective of AAC's [2011-2015 Strategic Plan](#) is "to increase diversity in all in grant programs, services, collaborations and events" in order "to increase equitable access to the arts, especially in the state's underserved populations and rural regions." The metrics of the objective's performance measurements are demographics of the members of AAC's Artist Registry, Arts in Education Roster and Arts on Tour Roster, of the audiences and other residents served by AAC grantees, and of the underserved populations employed by creative enterprises.

DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities—Equity and access is one focus area of DCCA's [Strategic Plan 2015](#). The plan states that DCCA "has a deep and long-standing commitment to cultural equity and to equitable access to cultural programs among the District's increasingly diverse population." The plan notes that DCCA staff and commissioners represent the city's diversity, that it has a grant program targeting historically African-American and underserved areas of the city, and that it pays attention to evolving community demographics. The plan's strategies include:

- "Adopt a cultural equity policy for the agency and identify opportunities to implement that policy across the Commission's programs and initiatives."
- "Identify creative economy initiatives that support the entrepreneurial activities of diverse artists...."
- "Actively address ongoing equity and access issues through capacity building and creative economy investments in addition to East of the River grants."
- "Ensure greater cultural diversity among artists who serve on grant panels."

Maryland State Arts Council—As MSAC states in its [Strategic Plan 2014-2019](#), arts organizations face the challenges of responding to "changing demographics—increasing diversity, aging audiences and artists and younger audience preferences." The plan's strategies include helping "constituents learn about diversity, demographic trends (local, regional and national) and best practices," showcasing "organizations and programs that successfully embrace diversity," and modeling "diversity in MSAC program and management practices."



Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs—MCACA's [Strategic Plan 2015 thru 2019](#) commits the agency to "more

The Peace Mission Korean Dance and Drumming Group performs at the 2016 Maryland Traditions Folklife Festival.

deeply engage young and diverse peoples, including diversity of gender, ethnicity, race and sexual orientation, in the MCACA process." Objectives include expansion of the roles of the New Leaders Arts Council of Michigan, a group of diverse young adults that MCACA engages in policy-making, grant making and public outreach.

Minnesota State Arts Board—A principle of the MSAB, as stated in its [Legacy Amendment Plan 2010-2035](#), is to ensure "arts, history and cultural heritage programs will engage our diverse communities from every corner of the state in celebrating the richness of our differences while building greater understanding and connection to the values that bind us together." A goal of the plan is to grow the "diversity of children and adults actively engaged in lifelong learning in arts, history and cultural heritage programs."

Nebraska Arts Council—A strategic goal in NAC's [2013-2015 Strategic Plan](#) is to "promote diversity and engagement." Related objectives are developing "organizational capacity for culturally specific communities and organizations," cultivating "arts leadership in diverse communities," and advocating for "diversity as key to vital and dynamic communities." The intended results are to make sure that the arts "reflect the state's diverse communities" and that "distinctive cultural traditions will be honored and preserved."

Nevada Arts Council—A goal of NAC's [Strategic Plan 2010-2015](#) is fostering recognition and support of "diversity and accessibility in arts and cultural activities." The plan's strategies include promoting "initiatives that increase public awareness of, accessibility to, and support for Nevada's rich cultural diversity," establishing new initiatives and partnerships that foster the diversity of artists and arts organizations, and supporting traditional and folk artists who preserve Nevada's cultural heritage and diversity.



North Carolina Arts Council—NCAC frames its [Strategic Plan 2015-2019](#) by noting, "Our capacity as a state to celebrate, reflect and engage the growing diversity of North Carolina's communities is equally important to the Arts Council's future sustainability." NCAC's vision for arts development recognizes that "cultural diversity is a tremendous asset to the arts." A goal of the plan is to "strengthen the arts industry's capacity to embrace diversity and engage the state's changing communities." Related objectives include:

- "Convene arts and civic leaders from diverse communities to help us better understand the full spectrum of how citizens are currently participating in the arts.
- Through the African American Heritage Commission, increase the sustainability and awareness of the state's African-American artistic traditions and resources.
- Provide funding and training through our Folklife Program to help communities document and sustain their diverse forms of cultural expression."

From the Nevada Arts Council Folklife Program's [Family Flowers: Traditional Embroidery from Southern Mexico](#)

Oregon Arts Commission—In the introduction of its [2015-2020 Strategic Plan](#), the Arts Commission says it will implement the plan relative to "diversity, equity and inclusion." It foregrounds its commitment to "supporting, working with and reaching into the many diverse communities and populations across Oregon." Objectives of the plan include adopting a "formal equity and

inclusion position statement," defining "the terms access, equity, diversity, inclusion and underserved" in relation to its work, identifying barriers that restrict specific populations from the Commission's services, and determining what "is most critical to artists from underserved populations and diverse disciplines."

South Dakota Arts Council—An objective of SDAC's [2015-2017 Strategic Plan](#) is to "commit to a policy of inclusion in every program to overcome barriers imposed by economic status, education, discrimination, distance, and special needs." To that end, SDAC plans on developing further its [Arts Expansion Policy](#), "which focuses on cultural participation of the state's rural citizens, ethnic minority groups—particularly Native Americans—and a growing number of immigrants."

Vermont Arts Council—The [environmental scan](#) from VAC's 2013-2017 Strategic Plan includes a section on Vermont's growing population of "new Americans," including international refugees and other recent immigrants. The section concludes that the "lack of scope and coordination that is necessary to meet the transitional artistic needs of these New American communities offers the Council a significant programmatic and professional development opportunity to seize the initiative and complement the efforts of the service organizations already engaged with these populations."

Washington State Arts Commission—One of the goals of ArtsWA's [Strategic Plan Framework for FY 2017-2021](#) is to "Expand arts participation in communities across Washington State, with a focus on cultural equity, to ensure all people have access to the arts." Two of the goal's objectives are to "build capacity for organizations and communities that are working to expand participation in the arts" and to "include individuals from diverse backgrounds on all panels and committees." The plan also features a "crosscutting objective" supporting each of its five goals: "Increase our specific and intentional efforts around social justice by ensuring that ArtsWA-funded activities and work are reflective of Washington's diverse populations including cultural diversity, artistic disciplines, geographic locations, and underserved populations."

STRATEGIC PLANNING PRACTICES ([back to TOC](#))

A strategic planning process is a good way for SAAs to incorporate the voices and perspectives of constituents with diverse backgrounds and experiences. These methods commonly include:

- Ensuring that culturally diverse individuals are included in invitations to planning forums
- Conducting one-on-one interviews with arts, civic, social service or educational providers specializing in services to culturally specific groups
- Conducting focus groups concentrating on the needs of culturally specific groups
- Collecting demographic data on surveys to accurately represent whom the responses do or do not include
- Appointing diverse individuals to serve on planning committees

Below are examples of SAAs that have taken additional steps to secure planning input from specific ethnicities or geographies.

Montana Arts Council—To inform its [2014-2018 strategic plan](#), MAC created a special survey for high school students on the Blackfeet Reservation. Through it, 92 Indian students provided insight about the arts relative to their personal, educational, family and community experiences. They also answered questions about technology and social media usage.

Nebraska Arts Council—An "Arts Council Office on Wheels" helped NAC conduct constituent listening forums in ethnic minority neighborhoods and rural communities while it developed its [2013-2015 Strategic Plan](#). This approach secured input from communities that are historically isolated or may not routinely respond to surveys and other more traditional outreach methods.

South Carolina Arts Commission—Each decade SCAC conducts a "[Canvas of the People](#)" to inform the long-term direction of the agency. The latest canvas effort included a statewide opinion poll with a sample structured to guarantee a response rate representative of the state's demographics and to secure responses from both within and beyond the state's arts community. It also featured a number public forums and consultations with the faith community and civil rights organizations designed to draw out the voices of the state's African-American population.

Grant-Making Policy ([back to TOC](#))

In fiscal year 2015, state arts agency grant-making policies and practices shaped the distribution of more than 20,000 grants nationwide, which exceeded \$257 million in public support for the arts. Given the broad influence and deep impact of this grant making, most SAAs take steps in addition to civil-rights compliance—which all states require—to design and implement programs that foster equity and inclusion. This extra effort not only supports the diversity practices of grantees but also helps realize high expectations for public investment in the arts.

GRANT POLICIES & GUIDELINES ([back to TOC](#))

Policies asserting the importance of equity and inclusion in SAA grant making are expressed through a variety of vehicles, including grant guidelines, guiding principles and authorizing legislation. Examples include the following.

DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities—[Municipal regulations](#) call for arts funding to "ensure that city funding for the arts occurs through a fair and transparent process and supports the delivery of services to the broadest possible spectrum of the community, with a particular emphasis on underserved communities."

New York State Council on the Arts—According to its [grants policy](#), NYSCA invests in grants that "serve all communities and people" and supports organizations that are inclusive and reflect through their staff and programming the state's "diversity of people, geography and artistic interests." NYSCA annually assesses the geographic allocation of grants to ensure that public support for the arts is spread equitably across the state, including areas that are isolated, economically disadvantaged or ethnically diverse.

South Dakota Arts Council—One [funding priority](#) of SDAC is making "the arts available to new, minority, and geographically isolated audiences." Specifically, SDAC targets Native Americans, recent immigrants and ethnic groups, among other underserved populations.

Texas Commission on the Arts—According to [Section 444.024](#) of its enabling legislation, TCA is required to have "equitable procedures for the distribution of grants to recipients who reflect the geographical, cultural, and ethnic diversity of the state's population." In 1992, TCA adopted an [equity plan](#) that ensures grant funds support organizations serving ethnically specific audiences

and/or regions. TCA reports on its efforts to equitably distribute grants via its biennial legislative appropriation request.

Virginia Commission for the Arts—VCA has a [guiding principle](#) articulating its belief that "through the arts we celebrate the diverse cultures of this country," its goal to fund efforts that "preserve and present the many cultures of contemporary life in the Commonwealth," and its expectation that grantees serving diverse communities "actively seek racial, ethnic, and/or cultural diversity in their artists, audiences, boards, and staff."



The Native American Drum and Dance Ensemble performs at the 2009 South Dakota Film Festival in Aberdeen.

Wisconsin Arts Board—According to [Section 41.53](#) of its enabling legislation, WAB must award grants each year amounting to at least 5% of all the state and federal funds it receives "to artists who are minority group members and arts groups composed principally of minority group members." [Section 41.565](#) directs WAB to award least 10% of its [Arts Challenge Initiative](#) grant funds to minority arts organizations.

Wyoming Arts Council—Recognizing the cultural, social and economic roles of tribal governments, WAC's [grant policies](#) provide special eligibility for tribal councils, organizations and committees by raising the ceiling on the number of grants they may receive. Applicants sponsored by tribes may receive up to one award per grant program per year, provided each one is for a different project.

APPLICANT/GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS AND DATA COLLECTION ([back to TOC](#))

Grant applications are another tool SAAs use to engender inclusive practices. These forms can articulate SAAs' expectations of prospective grantees, thereby encouraging best practices related to diversity. They also can be vehicles through which SAAs solicit demographic data from applicants. Below are some examples.

Arizona Commission on the Arts—According to ACA's [policy manual](#), "Local arts agencies applying for operating support must seek diverse cultural representation on their boards." In addition, ACA uses grant applications to collect data on applicants' race/ethnicity, which it does in compliance with state performance measurement rules.

Florida Division of Cultural Affairs—FDCA tracks the number of culturally specific organizations that apply for funding as well as the race/ethnicity of those organizations. It also collects data on the race/ethnicity of individual artist applicants.

Indiana Arts Commission—In a [best practices guide for grantee organizational governance](#), IAC indicates its expectation that participants in its regional partnership program will have a governing board and advisory committee reflective of constituents' diversity.

Missouri Arts Council—MAC collects diversity data through the application forms of several of its grants. Project and operating support applications ask organizations to describe the racial demographics of their staff, board and volunteers. The application for its Expressed Minority Arts Project Grant Program gathers descriptive information about how proposed projects will benefit targeted communities.

Nevada Arts Council—NAC's [grant policies and legal requirements](#) encourage grantees and partners to make a commitment to accessibility and diversity "as both a philosophic commitment and a business practice." NAC cites "making the arts accessible to Nevadans of all cultures and abilities, without prejudice to geographic or economic status," as a priority and encourages grantees to involve diverse populations "in the planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up of a program."

New Mexico Arts—NMA asks organizational applicants to report the race of their board members. NMA focuses on board demographics because research indicates a correlation between board, staff and audience compositions.

North Dakota Council on the Arts—According to its [general grant guidelines](#), NDCA "is committed to the support of multi-cultural arts activities. Applicants are encouraged to develop policies that support a broad range of cultural events and inclusion of all cultures in on-going programs. Efforts should also be made to diversify staffs and boards so that the voices of a culturally diverse community will be heard."

Tennessee Arts Commission—TAC requires grantees to complete [nondiscrimination training](#) prior to receiving their award. The training is based on [Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act](#), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

Utah Division of Arts & Museums—UAM's grant applications require organizational applicants to describe their engagement with underserved populations with limited access to arts experiences due to geography, ethnicity or economics.

GRANT EVALUATION CRITERIA ([back to TOC](#))

Objective evaluation criteria form the basis for reviewing and scoring grant applications, the common SAA process for selecting grantees and determining their award amount. For many SAAs, including those listed below, these criteria include factors indicative of how applicants address issues of diversity, such as whether their programming is inclusive and whether their governing body is reflective of the demographics of the communities they serve. Here are a few examples.

Alabama State Council on the Arts—ASCA's [evaluation criteria](#) for all grant applications account for applicants' support of "cultural diversity and multi-cultural artistic expression."

Arizona Commission on the Arts—As it explains in its [policy manual](#), ACA prioritizes funding to "ethnic-run organizations" and automatically assigns positive ranking marks to grant applications from these art groups.

Kentucky Arts Council—The [application evaluation criteria](#) of KAC's partnership grant program allocates 15% of the overall score to diversity, which is demonstrated by an applicant's "efforts to build diversity in the organization's leadership and participants," "promotion of diverse arts and culture," "programs or services that will take the organization's artistic product to new or broader audiences," and "programming inclusion of, and outreach to, underserved populations and people with disabilities."

New Hampshire State Council on the Arts—The [review criteria](#) for NHSCA's general operating support program accounts for evidence of inclusive programming policies, including but not limited to culturally diverse offerings.

New York State Council on the Arts—NYSCA's [general grant review criteria](#) account for all applicants' efforts to reach diverse audiences and organizational applicants' commitment to diversity on boards or other governing bodies.

North Carolina Arts Council—[Review criteria factors](#) for NCAC's State Arts Resources grant program favor programs inclusive of "racially and culturally diverse artists and participants," organizational commitment "to racial and cultural equity in its governance, administration, and programming," and public engagement activities and materials designed to diversify audiences.

South Dakota Arts Council—SDAC's [2015-2017 Strategic Plan](#) calls for awarding bonus points to grant applications for projects and programs that are inclusive.

Utah Division of Arts & Museums—Assessment of "community involvement and access" accounts for 40% of [review scores](#) for grant applications. To measure community involvement, UAM considers applicants' efforts "to understand and serve its community" and "to be inclusive of individuals from all demographic backgrounds."

Vermont Arts Council—The grants review criteria of VAC's [Arts Impact Grant](#) and [Project Grant](#) programs account for applicants' outreach to new audiences and/or underserved populations, including "New American" (recent immigrant) communities.



An Arizona Commission on the Arts grant panel

PANELIST SELECTION ([back to TOC](#))

To ensure that diverse perspectives drive grant-making decisions, almost all SAAs have a policy requiring grant applications to be adjudicated by peer-review panels reflective of the state's demographics. The definition of diversity may include differences in race, ethnicity, culture, age, geography, sexual orientation and more.

Colorado Creative Industries—[Panelists](#) for CCI's Colorado Creates Grant Program include artists, arts administrators and community leaders "who represent diverse geographic, ethnic, philosophical and aesthetic perspectives." The panel nomination form requires prospective panelists to describe how they represent those diverse interests.

DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities—In its call for grants panelists, DCCAH articulates its policy of supporting "panel diversity in all forms: age, race, gender, disabilities, sexual orientation, artistic discipline, location, etc."

Oklahoma Arts Council—In compliance with Oklahoma's [administrative code](#), OAC's grants panels reflect the state's diversity with respect to "racial, ethnic, geographical, and culturally diverse backgrounds."

Grant Programs [\(back to TOC\)](#)

State arts agencies can design their grant programs to address specific goals related to diversity, equity and inclusion in the arts. They also can further their commitment to diversity by leveraging the requirements and goals of various other types of grants.

GRANTS WITH SPECIFIC DIVERSITY GOALS [\(back to TOC\)](#)

Nineteen SAAs have grant programs with distinct diversity goals. Some of them prioritize capacity building for culturally specific organizations or incentivize culturally inclusive practices. Most but not all of these awards—in the form of operating, project, program and capital support—are for organizations. Some of these programs also include nongrant benefits, such as technical, networking and advocacy assistance. Examples of grants with diversity goals follow.

Alaska State Council on the Arts—ART Shop is a new pilot program providing grants to enable members of ASCA's Alaska Native Arts Leadership Cohort to present hands-on art workshops in rural communities. While the pilot is serving underserved communities, its main goal is to develop the professional capacity of the cohort's Alaska Native members by fostering peer-to-peer learning, stronger administrative skills, and effective working relationships among cohort members, ASCA staff and other stakeholders.



The Alaska Native Arts Leadership cohort of the Alaska State Council on the Arts

California Arts Council—The [Statewide Networks Program](#) awards grants to culturally specific, multicultural and discipline based arts networks and service organizations in effort to strengthen their capacity. It also provides support to these statewide and regional groups via communications, professional development, networking and arts advocacy.

[Cultural Pathways](#) is a pilot program providing two years of operating support to small and emerging (arts and non-arts) organizations rooted in communities of color, tribal groups, or recent immigrant and refugee communities. It also offers, as part of its goal to build the capacity

of organizations serving and representing the state's diverse populations, technical assistance and professional development opportunities.

Florida Division of Cultural Affairs—The [Diversity & Inclusion Awards](#) program recognizes "innovative and exceptional efforts that promote diversity in arts and cultural programming." Awards of \$500, \$750 or \$1,000 enable awardees to reinvest in their work related to six categories: demographic diversity, socioeconomic diversity, cultural heritage, sexual orientation, age and accessibility. FDCA, which collaborates on this program with [Citizens for Florida Arts, Inc.](#), publicly honors awardees during a special ceremony at its annual Convening Culture Conference.

Through three funding categories, the FDCA's [Underserved Cultural Community Development Program](#) underwrites the development of underserved cultural organizations, including those "deeply rooted in and reflective of a specific religious, racial, national, or cultural group of non-western or Judeo-Christian tradition" or those with a staff, board, artist and volunteer base that is at least 51% minority. The program awards capacity building grants, consultant grants and salary assistance grants.

Indiana Arts Commission—A goal of the [Capacity Building Partnership Program](#) is to support grantees' efforts to foster diversity and strengthen the fabric of their community. Examples include recruiting board members representative of their community, targeting outreach to diverse or underserved communities and developing other organizational practices in support of equity and pluralism.

Minnesota State Arts Board—The goal of the [Cultural Community Partnership](#) is to help artists of color develop their creative practices and advance their careers. It awards grants to support collaborative projects. Project partners must "develop authentic relationships and arts experiences within or across diverse communities" or "change, expand, or enrich the ways they connect to their communities."



Minnesota State Arts Board grantee Eric F. Avery (standing) in his collaborative performance, Play[ing] + (P)house

Missouri Arts Council—The [Express Minority Arts project grant](#) is awarded monthly to "minority-managed organizations" or "non-minority organizations that provide arts to predominantly African-American, Asian-American, Latino/Hispanic, or Native American communities." Grants cover artist fees, artist travel expenses, marketing expenses and educational materials. The grant covers up to 50% of project costs or \$3,000, whichever is less.

Ohio Arts Council—The [Building Cultural Diversity](#) program awards general operating support and program grants (\$1,000 – \$3,000) to arts organizations with a mission, program portfolio, staff and board representing culturally specific communities. The program aims to celebrate and preserve culturally significant artistic traditions and practices.

Pennsylvania Council on the Arts—[Preserving Diverse Cultures](#) is an umbrella effort encompassing four grant programs supporting arts organizations with a mission rooted in and reflective of African-American, Latino, Native American, Asian-American and Hispanic (ALNAH) perspectives. The [Strategies for Success](#) program offers a range of grants (\$7,000-\$20,000) that aim to build organizational capacity, cover program costs and cement long-term stability. The Technical Assistance & Professional Development program awards funding (up to \$2,000) to ALNAH organizations ineligible to participate in the Strategies for Success Program. The Community-Based Engagement pilot awards funding to ALNAH communities developing and/or implementing community based arts and culture projects. The Professional Development for the Individual Artist track subsidizes conference fees and other professional development opportunities.

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts—The [Expansion Arts Program](#) is a collaborative effort of RISCA, the Rhode Island Foundation and the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities. It offers three-year capacity building grants (\$10,000 per year) and technical assistance to "community-based, culturally diverse arts and cultural organizations." The Rhode Island Foundation administers the grants.

Tennessee Arts Commission—[Arts Access](#) offers program and project support to both arts and non-arts organizations, increasing the inclusion of racial and ethnic minorities and other underserved and underrepresented communities. Arts organizations are eligible to receive \$500-\$10,000, and non-arts organizations are eligible for \$500-\$7,000.

Texas Commission on the Arts—The [Arts Create-2](#) program awards two-year general operating support to established minority arts organizations with a budget of more than \$50,000. The grants (\$3,000 to 25% of the grantee's annual cash operating budget) are to advance the state's creative economy.

Wisconsin Arts Board—The [Arts Challenge Initiative](#) offers grants in effort to build the capacity and bolster the sustainability of racially diverse arts organizations.

The [Woodland Indian Arts Initiative](#), meanwhile, awards grants (\$1,500-\$4,000) in support of traditional and contemporary Native American arts. Funding priorities include salary support, technical assistance, professional development, and documentation, presentation and promotion of Native American arts and culture. The grants are underwritten by revenue from the state's [tribal gaming compacts](#).

GRANTS WITH COMPLEMENTARY GOALS ([back to TOC](#))

Grant programs can support multiple equity and accessibility issues that include—but are not necessarily limited to—cultural diversity. A large majority of SAAs have at least one such program. Some of these grants focus on arts organizations while others address programming that engages underserved communities or specific populations, like at-risk youth.

Kentucky Arts Council—The [Arts Access Assistance](#) program serves populations with limited opportunities to experience the arts due to age, disability, ethnicity, economic status, geography or other factors. It awards grants to support arts programming in places it generally is not found, focusing each grant cycle on a specific population. A wide range of state agencies and community based organizations are eligible to apply.

Maine Arts Commission—MAC sustains Maine's cultural heritage through its [Traditional Arts Apprenticeship](#) program. With grants of \$3,000, master artists pass on their skills and knowledge

to apprentice artists through one-to-one, hands-on instruction. Preference is given to applications submitted by master and apprentice artists who belong to the same ethnic, religious, occupational, tribal or familial group.

Massachusetts Cultural Council—The [YouthReach](#) program awards three-year grants supporting out-of-school arts, humanities and science opportunities for at-risk youth. Beneficiaries include those who have disabilities, have dropped out of school, have been victims of violence or have lived in economically depressed circumstances.

Minnesota State Arts Board—The goal of the [Arts Access](#) program is "to encourage strategic, long-term engagement between arts organizations and traditionally underserved communities." It awards grants that may be used for a number of activities, including relationship building with underserved communities and development of artwork that is relevant to them.

Mississippi Arts Commission—The [Arts-Based Community Development Program](#) supports efforts that leverage the arts to improve communities. It awards general operating support, project and mini-grants to arts agencies, arts organizations and artists working in support of economic development, social services, youth services, diversity and cultural inclusion, and more.

Nebraska Arts Council—[School Bus for the Arts Grants](#) underwrite the costs of arts focused field trips for K-12 students. Funding is prioritized for schools and communities with limited access to arts or cultural programs as a result of geography, economic conditions or ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of students utilizing free/reduced lunch is an indicator of the level of need.

New Jersey State Council on the Arts—In the [guidelines](#) for its folk arts grant program, NJSCA describes diversity as "one of New Jersey's most significant and valuable characteristics." It also says: "The state's many geographic and demographic settings are interwoven with ethnic, cultural and occupational networks, creating a dynamic array of communities. In them, traditional folk arts are often valued ways of expressing identity and strengthening group ties." Funds are awarded to a wide array of professional and occupational tradition bearers in diverse communities.



An Artistic Noise youth participant holds his artwork. Serving youth in the Massachusetts juvenile justice system, this program helps teens envision alternatives and develop art.

New York State Council on the Arts—[Special Arts Services](#) fund organizations that increase access to the arts for historically underserved communities. The program has four funding mechanisms: general support, project support, instruction and training, and regranting and partnerships.

Washington State Arts Commission—[Innovations Incentive Awards](#) supplement project support grants to incentivize arts organizations "to experiment with innovative methods of increasing arts participation with young and diverse audiences."

West Virginia Commission on the Arts—The [Cultural Facilities and Capital Resources Grant](#) helps arts organizations acquire real estate as well as renovate existing facilities and capital equipment. One of the program's purposes is to "further cultural development in...minority communities."

DECENTRALIZED GRANT MAKING ([back to TOC](#))

Fifteen SAAs have decentralized grant-making policies, which designate a percentage of state grant funds for allocation via local arts agencies or other local, county or regional partners. Some of these programs, like those below, prioritize aligning award funding with community demographics.

Massachusetts Cultural Council—MCC describes its [Local Cultural Council Program](#) as "the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation." Through the [Gold Star Awards](#) component of the program, MCC recognizes local cultural council (LCC) partners doing exemplary work, including [those providing opportunities](#) to diverse and other underserved communities. According to MCC's [Municipal Guide to Local Cultural Councils](#), diversity—be it racial, ethnic or economic—is a quality MCC looks for in prospective LCC partners.

New York State Council on the Arts—A goal of the [State & Local Partnerships](#) program is to "encourage greater public participation in the arts by all segments of the state's population" by supporting programs and services that meet the cultural needs of diverse communities.

Texas Commission on the Arts—The [Arts Create Subgranting Program](#) awards multiyear grants (\$3,000 – \$40,000) to local arts agencies for regranting in their communities. Program applicants hailing from communities with populations of more than 500,000 are encouraged to prioritize minority organizations when regranting funds.

Technical Assistance ([back to TOC](#))

Technical assistance can be as important to an arts ecosystem as financial support. Training, tools and technical assistance may be needed to reshape assumptions, practices and relationships. Technical assistance is often flexible and hands-on, which enables state arts agencies to develop responsive and respectful relationships with constituents. These interactions can foster trust, which is valuable when addressing equity and inclusion in the arts.

PROFESSIONAL & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ([back to TOC](#))

State arts agencies, like those below, facilitate professional and leadership development training for diverse individuals and organizations.

California Arts Council—CAC's [Cultural Pathways](#) pilot program aims to build the capacity of small and emerging organizations representing communities of color, recent immigrants and/or tribal groups. It provides technical assistance and professional development activities in addition to operating support grants. Both arts and non-arts groups are eligible.

Louisiana Division of the Arts—[New Populations](#) was a multiyear initiative of LDOA's Folklife program that aimed to connect new immigrant populations to Louisiana's arts infrastructure. The project, which identified and documented the culture and art forms of these groups, led to the creation of the [Open Doors Mentoring Program](#). Through the latter effort, LDOA provided grant funding, capacity building support and other technical assistance to immigrant organizations to prepare them for other LDOA funding opportunities.

Maryland State Arts Council—MSAC has made a special two-year investment in the [Urban Arts Leadership Program](#), an initiative of the Baltimore Cultural Alliance that is developing a pipeline of diverse arts leaders. MSAC is hosting a program fellow in its offices in 2016.



The California Arts Council's [Cultural Pathways pilot program](#)

Nebraska Arts Council—As Nebraska's racial and ethnic demographics evolve, NAC's community development manager works with communities in transition to encourage them to use the arts as a catalyst for change. NAC staff members strategically visit culturally specific organizations as frequently as non-culturally specific groups. Some of the culturally specific groups NAC has supported are the [Asian Community and Cultural Center](#), the [Midlands Latino Development Corporation](#) and the [South Omaha Business Association](#), which serves a large Latino population. Additionally, NAC offers an arts and diversity workshop for arts leaders who want to increase the diversity of their organization and its offerings.

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts—The [Expansion Arts Program](#) is a collaborative effort of RISCA, the Rhode Island Foundation and the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities. In addition to grant funding, it offers capacity building workshops to participating arts and cultural organizations, which must be culturally diverse to participate.

South Carolina Arts Commission—SCAC provides scholarships to enable a diverse group of arts leaders to participate in the [Diversity Leaders Initiative](#) of the Riley Institute at Furman University. Participants learn to understand their diversity and inclusion "blind spots" and how to suspend assumptions. They come away with focused decision-making skills and knowledge of how to effectively manage and lead increasingly diverse workers, clients and constituents. Subsequently, the participants sponsored by SCAC serve on the agency's advisory committee on diversity.

DIVERSITY TRAINING ([back to TOC](#))

Many SAAs lead trainings specifically focused on issues of and strategies for equity and inclusion in the arts. Others integrate diversity topics into the agenda of a broader event, like an annual conference, or into the curricula of other workshops. Examples are below.

Colorado Creative Industries—CCI's [2015 Colorado Creative Industries Summit](#) included a session called Why It Matters: Building Inclusion in Colorado Cultural Institutions, which addressed a number of issues as well as related lessons learned.

Delaware Division of the Arts—The [2015 Delaware Arts Summit](#) featured two sessions related to diversity in the arts. The Dynamic Community Engagement workshop focused on tactics for engaging minority and recent immigrant communities and related case studies. The Building Audiences workshop reviewed findings from research commissioned by The Wallace Foundation on the growing diversity of arts audiences.

Florida Division of Cultural Affairs—The theme of FDCA's 2016 annual conference was [Celebrating Diversity through Florida's Arts & Culture](#). Sessions included a workshop on creating diverse audiences for community engagement; a discussion on navigating diversity in the art world; and a panel on Florida's diverse cultural partnerships. The conference also featured a plenary presentation on changing demographics and the inaugural presentation of the FDCA's new [Diversity & Inclusion Awards](#).



The Florida Division of Cultural Affairs focused on diversity and inclusion in its recent statewide conference.

Indiana Arts Commission, Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs, Ohio Arts Council—

In 2013, these three SAAs jointly sponsored a colloquium, [Embracing Community Change through the Arts](#), to explore strategies for building diversity in arts organizations. Sessions featured nationally recognized experts exploring how arts organizations can better represent all community facets and advance diversity initiatives through leadership development, decision making and programming, and community involvement. There was a special focus on engaging culturally, geographically and socially diverse residents as well as underserved populations who experience barriers to participating in the arts.

Oklahoma Arts Council—The [2015 Oklahoma Arts Conference](#) included a session entitled Broadening the Spectrum: Inclusivity and Evolution, which focused on how organizations can "embrace a mission-driven imperative to make inclusivity an essential component of their makeup."

West Virginia Commission on the Arts—WVCA's [Peer Assistance Network](#) facilitates diversity trainings by connecting arts organizations with arts educators, arts administrators and artists with relevant expertise.

NETWORKING & PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ([back to TOC](#))

Networks and collaborations expand the capacity of both SAAs and their constituents to foster productive relationships, develop new ideas, facilitate change and magnify the impact of diversity and inclusion work. Here are some examples of collaborations and connections facilitated by SAAs.

Alabama State Council on the Arts—The [Black Belt Arts Initiative](#) is a funding and empowerment partnership between ASCA and the Black Belt Community Foundation (BBCF) designed to serve

one of the poorest regions in the United States. At the heart of the program is the philosophy that art is an essential component of healthy communities, not a luxury. ASCA established the partnership with the BBCF to create a sense of local ownership and agency among policymakers, arts organizations, schools, artists and the primarily African-American community. Grant making is decentralized through BBCF. A full-time arts coordinator, based in the region, is funded as part of this program.

Arizona Commission on the Arts—[AZ ArtWorker](#) is a pilot program providing artist-to-artist professional development. The program is focused on but not limited to Latino and Native American artists. With a \$30,000 grant from the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation and in partnership with Arizona State University, the pilot is facilitating public conversations, networking, experimental activities, arts workshops and entrepreneurship training.

Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Agency—GCAHA hosted the [Festival of Pacific Arts](#) in 2016, a quadrennial event convening artists and practitioners from around the Pacific region. With delegations from 27 nations and territories, it is a major regional gathering where Pacific peoples unite to enhance their respect and appreciation of one another. A major goal of the festival is to counter the erosion of traditional cultural practices.

Idaho Commission on the Arts—ICA provides financial, logistical and consulting support to [Artisans for Hope](#), a nonprofit organization that leverages traditional fiber related handcraft skills to help refugees from Afghanistan, Pakistan and more than 30 other countries resettle in Boise. Since 2012 this collaboration has produced a traveling exhibition of quilted and stitched artworks depicting the refugees' narratives. The exhibit tours rural areas and includes community based activities and connections to local school districts that foster intercultural understanding.



Illinois Arts Council Agency, Rhode Island State Council on the Arts—Both SAAs recently have hosted [Open Dialogue](#), which is a biennial meeting of The Association of American Cultures that convenes "artists and cultural workers reflective of our pluralistic society." Participants "discuss issues, challenges, successes and perspectives of arts organizations and artists in communities of color."

The Association of American Cultures held Open Dialogue XIII: People, Places and Policy, in Rhode Island.

Maryland State Arts Council—MSAC's Cultural Diversity Outreach Committee evolved out of the agency's [Strategic Plan 2014-2019](#), which addresses diversity, equity and inclusion in the arts through several goals as well as its vision and values statements. The committee, which formed in 2016 and includes council members, former council members and staff, envisions a cultural environment in which diversity of artists, arts managers and arts audiences is the standard and not the exception. The group is developing a work plan to address how MSAC can better encourage diversity in the state's arts organizations and support underserved constituents.

Nebraska Arts Council—NAC collaborates with the [African-American Empowerment Network](#) of Omaha, which is dedicated to rebuilding inner-city business districts and neighborhoods. NAC's community development manager chairs the network's arts and culture covenant. NAC also helped develop a cultural district in Omaha that is a public-private partnership among the network, the municipal government, various development corporations and local business.

North Carolina Arts Council—Since 2011, NCAC has been the administrative home of the [North Carolina African American Heritage Commission](#) (AAHC), a [legislatively created](#) body responsible for "the preservation, interpretation, and promotion of African-American history, arts, and culture." AAHC goals include recognizing the people, places, themes and programs that shape African-American heritage, fostering public awareness, and developing partnerships to these ends within and beyond the state. AAHC's [Gathering Place Project](#) provides training and other technical assistance to African-American museum spaces, including cultural centers, archives, historic schools, historic homes, historic cemeteries, galleries and libraries. AAHC's [Freedom Roads](#) is a statewide trail system recognizing the North Carolina roads, rivers and ports "crucial to the efforts of enslaved African Americans seeking freedom."

Texas Commission on the Arts—As TCA recognizes that ethnically specific minority arts organizations are often underresourced and underfunded, it strives to maintain regular contact with this group of constituents. To this end, it has worked cooperatively with the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures, National Association of Latino Independent Producers, The Association of American Cultures, Texas Folklife, African Grove Institute for the Arts and the Houston Institute for Culture.

Utah Division of Arts & Museums—UAM staff representatives serve on the State Office of Education's Coalition for Minorities Advisory Committee as well as its American Indian Education Task Force.

Wisconsin Arts Board—WAB helped facilitate the creation of the [Black Arts Think Tank](#) (BATT), an organization with a mission to build "strong, sustainable arts organizations that preserve and promote the history and culture of the African diaspora and inspire creativity in future generations." BATT evolved from a WAB convening of 50 community, corporation and foundation leaders, who recognized the sustainability challenges of African-American arts organizations and discussed how they could support diversity in the arts.

TOOLKITS ([back to TOC](#))

Toolkits, workbooks and related media enable users to learn and adopt best practices at their own pace and relative to the specific contexts of their organizational culture and community needs. Following are some examples.

Mississippi Arts Commission—MAC's [Diversity Toolkit](#) is a training manual for arts leaders working to increase the diversity of their organization and its programming. The toolkit includes a "diversity and cultural proficiency assessment tool," addresses strategies for increasing diversity, and describes action steps for initiating dialogues on diversity and cultural proficiency.

Tennessee Arts Commission—TAC's Folklife Program helped produce a video, [Diversity in the Arts: From Mission to Practice](#), featuring best practices for "cultural diversity in arts programming, board development, and outreach to the underserved." The Folklife Program also commissioned the development of a publication, [Latino Folk Arts and Traditions in East Tennessee](#), "documenting Latino traditional artists, art forms and cultural events."

Washington State Arts Commission—One product of ArtsWA's four-year Arts Participation Leadership Initiative (APLI) was the creation of the [Engage Diverse Cultural Groups](#) web portal, which features a toolkit with practical steps for increasing diversity in the arts as well as a number of related case studies.

EXPANDING MARKETS [\(back to TOC\)](#)

Many SAAs have programs designed to create market opportunities for artists. Some of these programs have been developed for or tailored to the needs of specific communities of color.

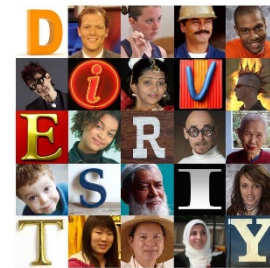
Alaska State Council on the Arts—Through the [Silver Hand](#) initiative, which is part of its [Alaska Native Arts Program](#), ASCA authenticates original, handmade Alaska Native artwork to help art collectors identify and buy it. The Silver Hand seal is protected under Alaska trademark statute and regulation. With it, Alaska Native artists leverage their creative identity and grow the market for their work.

The [Alaska Native Artist Resource Workbook](#), produced by ASCA in partnership with The CIRI Foundation, supplements ASCA's Artist Professional Development Workshops and can be used as a template for additional community-initiated workshops. A component of ASCA's Alaska Native Arts Program, the workbook addresses marketing, professional business standards, state regulations, fraud protection and more in relation to Alaska Native artists.

Montana Arts Council—The [Montana Artrepreneur Program](#) is designed to expand opportunities for rural artists, including members of Montana tribes. Through a certification program, coaching and training, participating artists build an Artrepreneur's Toolbox that hones their business and marketing practices. Evaluation findings indicate that participating artists generated a [nearly 400% increase in net sales](#).

New Mexico Arts—NMA's [Economic and Entrepreneurial Development](#) program fosters arts-based economic development of communities by supporting activities related to cultural tourism and arts entrepreneurship. The program benefits rural residents, many of whom are Hispanic.

North Carolina Arts Council—NCAC's [African American Music Trails](#) program highlights the rich heritage of African-American music in eastern North Carolina. Through a guidebook (available as a PDF and in print) and a website featuring music videos, information on different musical genres, an events calendar, and recommendations of things to do and places to eat, the program boosts revenue for trail sites while educating visitors and residents alike about important musical traditions.



**A Toolkit for Mississippi's
Arts Organizations**



Infusing Diversity throughout All SAA Programs [\(back to TOC\)](#)

While this catalogue foregrounds specific policies, practices and initiatives designed to address diversity and equity issues, it is important to note that *every* activity a public agency undertakes offers opportunities to work in an inclusive way. Below are some examples of how some state arts agencies are reflecting the values and practices of inclusion in their ongoing work.

Connecticut Office of the Arts—COA's [Higher Order Thinking \(HOT\) Schools](#) program is a nationally recognized, arts based model for improving preK-12 schools. It has served more than 47 Connecticut schools, reaching more than 100,000 students of diverse backgrounds in urban, suburban and rural areas of the state—including some high-poverty areas and schools with majority African American and Latino enrollment. The program promotes equitable and accessible opportunities for all students through arts learning, arts integration and democratic practice. Its most recent [teacher-training institute](#) featured sessions on how to foster inclusion and intercultural understanding in the classroom as well as how to draw on multicultural traditions to teach core curriculum requirements. The program partners with the State Historic Preservation Office and The Amistad Foundation to connect social studies and arts learning curricula to the [Connecticut Freedom Trail](#), which celebrates Connecticut's African-American community.

Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts—[Enriched by Diversity](#) was an exhibit at the Hawai'i State Art Museum, which is run by HSFA, that reflected the mix of the state's ethnic and cultural traditions.

Iowa Arts Council—[Iowa's statute](#) governing the process for designating the state poet laureate charges the nominating committee, formed by IAC and Humanities Iowa, "with considering the diversity of the people and poetry of Iowa."

Kentucky Arts Council—During their annual assessment of KAC's programming priorities and results, staff consider how the agency is serving the breadth of the state's demographic diversity and set goals for reaching in the year ahead those communities that remain underserved.

Massachusetts Cultural Council—MCC's [Cultural Investment Portfolio Organizational Capacity Measurement Tool](#) accounts for diversity relative to an organization's staff and board composition.

Missouri Arts Council—Nominations for the Missouri Arts Awards, according to MAC's [Council Orientation Book](#), should consider whether nominees represent the state's cultural diversity.

Nebraska Arts Council—The state art collection, according to [state statute](#), is to be representative of "Nebraska's ethnic, racial minority, and cultural groups."

Oklahoma Arts Council—In the [Why the Arts Matter](#) section of its website, which models messages about the public value of the arts, OAC cites the state's "diverse cultural roots" as an asset.

Utah Division of Arts & Museums—UAM has cultivated relationships with a large pool of multicultural artists for its [Teaching Artist Roster](#). Artists on the roster are recommended to schools and community groups for residencies, community projects and events.

For Additional Insight [\(back to TOC\)](#)

While in-depth, this catalogue is not an exhaustive list of every policy, program or practice that state arts agencies are using to foster diversity, equity and inclusion in the arts. NASAA also can provide:

- Examples of additional SAA policies and/or practices not included in this catalogue
- Analysis of SAA grants distribution relative to demographic and economic characteristics
- Resources on diversity and equity developed by other sectors, such as philanthropy, social justice and education

NASAA always wants to learn more about your agency's work. Please let us know if your agency has a new or updated policy, program or service that supports diversity in the arts. Contact NASAA Research Manager [Paul Pietsch](#).

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