Community Development Network Session Notes

October 24, 2025

Coordinators

Rachel Morgan, Program Specialist, Nebraska Arts Council
Lisa Burk-McCoy, Creative Community Development, New Hampshire State Council on the Arts

What priorities are bubbling up right now?

- Equity in grant making
    - Dealing with political nature of the word *equity*
    - Changes that are upcoming
- Creative arts districts
- Capacity, proactive and responsive
- Arts and culture having to compete with funding with sports teams/cultural spaces for viewing parties
- ARPA cliff: evaluation of grant programs; less money, but more people wanting it
- Evaluating the efficacy of the people granted to (peer evaluation system, panel system [works within the parameters within the panel], spending money but not really serving community)
    - Creative West: Ethical grant making, Cultural Sustainability Grant, two LORs from the community. So can see an org actually benefiting the community
    - Mass Cultural Council: Revamped grant programs.
    - Maryland State Arts Council also restructuring programs
- Competition regionally, DEI and thinking of path forward, geographically specific resources (rural communities, both creating opportunities and reaching out to them)

- Arts and wellness work: Doctors able to prescribe arts experiences and have insurance cover it. How to find those partners?
    - Mass MOCA: Free entrance for qualifying individuals
- Collaboration with different agencies (national communication development network?) Partnering with federal?
- Gatekeeping: Are others experiencing it? How to deal with it? How to spread the wealth?
    - Technical assistance programs baked into agency
    - Small business/economy development model. Individual consultations and professional development services. If not as much money in grants, have resources in brain power. Develop services around feedback from constituents.
    - Space between technical assistance and how we can be changing as government employees.
    - Advisory committees on who does or does not get a grant: These advisory committees evaluations are sometimes nonexistent, and it is not always clear who is part of those committees.

How can the Community Development Network address these priorities?

- States meet with regional arts organizations, partnerships.
- Poll priorities and use meetings to specifically address those.
- Identify SAAs that have solved problems other states are going through.
- Bring in specialist to address specifics.
- Be aware of the process you took to get there and not just the solutions and lessons along the way.