NASAA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY of STATE ARTS AGENCIES

Knowledge ▲ Representation ▲ Community

REPORT TO COUNCILS

June 2025

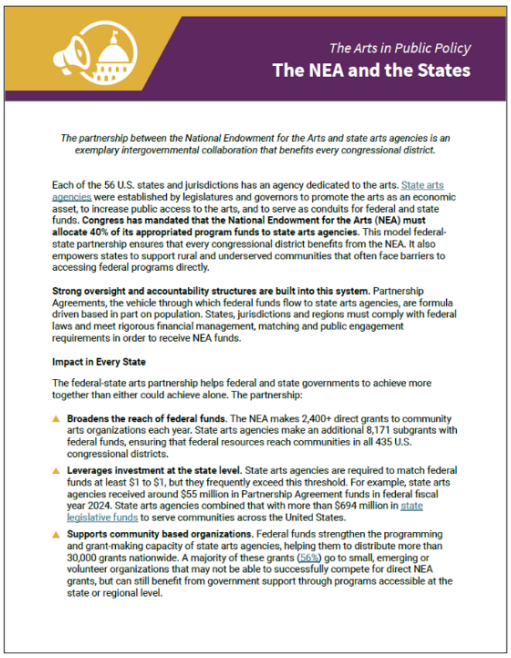
As an appointed arts leader, you can depend on NASAA to advocate on your agency's behalf in Congress, to equip you with useful facts and tools, and to connect you with your peers. Read on for the latest NASAA news—and insert a copy in your next council meeting materials!

Federal Arts Budget Update

Congress currently faces two major tasks: passing a reconciliation package to extend the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and approving the fiscal year 2026 federal budget. While the reconciliation bill is not directly related to arts policy, legislators' focus on this priority of President Trump is likely to delay negotiations on upcoming funding for federal agencies—including the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). As he did throughout his previous term, the President has called for elimination of the NEA in his draft budget. However, public funding for the arts has had strong bipartisan support in Congress, and NASAA is advocating to sustain support for the NEA. Read on for tools you can use to help maintain this support with your legislators at this critical time.

NASAA Is Your Advocacy Partner

If your head is spinning over recent executive orders, agency elimination proposals and federal arts grant cancellations, you're not alone. NASAA is your partner in advocacy, representing the interests of state and jurisdictional arts agencies to the federal government. We are on top of recent developments and are responding swiftly to provide resources that can help you make the case for federal arts support in today's policy environment. See our **Return on Investment: Public Arts Funding** page for these tools and more:



The Arts in Public Policy

The NEA and the States

The partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts and state arts agencies is an exemplary intergovernmental collaboration that benefits every congressional district.

Each of the 56 U.S. states and jurisdictions has an agency dedicated to the arts. State arts agencies were established by legislatures and governors to promote the arts as an economic asset, to increase public access to the arts, and to serve as conduits for federal and state funds. **Congress has mandated that the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) must allocate 40% of its appropriated program funds to state arts agencies.** This model federal-state partnership ensures that every congressional district benefits from the NEA. It also empowers states to support rural and underserved communities that often face barriers to accessing federal programs directly.

Strong oversight and accountability structures are built into this system. Partnership Agreements, the vehicle through which federal funds flow to state arts agencies, are formula driven based in part on population. States, jurisdictions and regions must comply with federal laws and meet rigorous financial management, matching and public engagement requirements in order to receive NEA funds.

Impact in Every State

The federal-state arts partnership helps federal and state governments to achieve more together than either could achieve alone. The partnership:

- **Broadens the reach of federal funds.** The NEA makes 2,400+ direct grants to community arts organizations each year. State arts agencies make an additional 8,171 subgrants with federal funds, ensuring that federal resources reach communities in all 435 U.S. congressional districts.
- **Leverages investment at the state level.** State arts agencies are required to match federal funds at least $1 to $1, but they frequently exceed this threshold. For example, state arts agencies received around $55 million in Partnership Agreement funds in federal fiscal year 2024. State arts agencies combined that with more than $694 million in state legislative funds to serve communities across the United States.
- **Supports community based organizations.** Federal funds strengthen the programming and grant-making capacity of state arts agencies, helping them to distribute more than 30,000 grants nationwide. A majority of these grants (56%) go to small, emerging or volunteer organizations that may not be able to successfully compete for direct NEA grants, but can still benefit from government support through programs accessible at the state or regional level.

- **The NEA and the States** describes the unique federal-state partnership that allocates 40% of NEA grant funding to state and jurisdictional arts agencies.
- **Return on Investment: National Endowment for the Arts** demonstrates the broad reach of the NEA's funding—to all 435 U.S. congressional districts.
- **The Arts as a Nonpartisan Issue** cites consensus values supported by public arts funding that extend across the political spectrum.

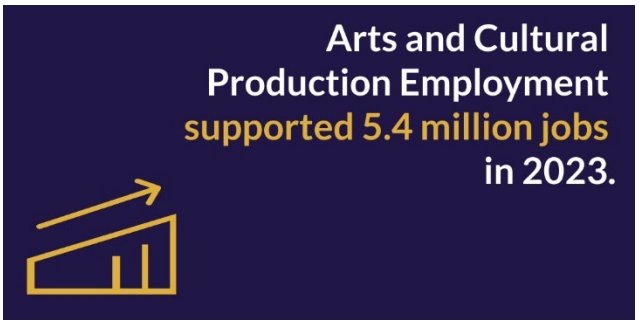
Thank you for being a respected partner in advocacy!

The Latest Data on Your State's Creative Economy

NASAA's annually updated Creative Economy State Profiles dashboard describes the value of arts and cultural production in each state and the nation. These data are published by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis in partnership with the NEA. In 2023, arts and cultural production accounted for:

- $1.17 trillion in value added to the U.S. economy
- a $36.8 billion trade surplus
- 5.4 million U.S. jobs

Use this interactive dashboard to discover how your state performed, and share the data with your legislators and constituents.



Your Input Wanted on NASAA Board, Services

NASAA's Nominating Committee is reaching out to all state arts agency chairs and executive directors to invite feedback on NASAA's services and to ask for recommendations for director positions on the NASAA board. Current state arts agency chairs and council members are eligible to serve on the board—learn more about the attributes and leadership skills NASAA is looking for in 2026. If you would like to be considered for NASAA board service, please let your chair or director know. If you have any questions, reach out to Dora Shick at NASAA.

Just for You: Summer Session in the Works

Stay tuned for details about the next virtual chair and council member peer group session happening later this summer. If you have ideas for future discussion topics or are interested in helping lead an upcoming session, reach out to Katie Hughes.

Together, We Move the Arts Forward

NASAA is working hard to protect public support for the arts. We're making the case on Capitol Hill for continued public investment and showing how the arts strengthen communities nationwide.

You make our work stronger in so many ways. Because our advocacy isn't funded by government dollars, individual contributions are essential to keeping this work going. Your support helps ensure that state arts agencies have a strong, unified voice in Washington, D.C.—that's especially important right now. Learn more about how you can support NASAA, or make a contribution now. Thank you!

NASAA

For questions or more information, contact Katie Hughes, katie.hughes@nasaa-arts.org

www.nasaa-arts.org @NASAA.Arts @NASAA_Arts