



## **NEW JERSEY STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS FY26 PROGRAM AND OPERATIONS PLAN**

*Previously approved in July 2025, this Plan has been updated to reflect the inclusion of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in August 2025.*

### **OVERVIEW**

The Program and Operations Plan is created within the context of the Council's [Strategic Plan \(2023-2028\)](#), and is intended to guide the work of the agency throughout Fiscal Year 2026, which is July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. The Plan is the result of ongoing self-assessment, measuring last year's progress, and accounting for current circumstances and capacity.

As of this writing, the Department of State (DOS) has renewed the Telework Pilot Program, permitting Council staff to work remotely two days per week and from the office in Trenton three days. The Council currently employs a staff of 15 full-time employees, with continued efforts to build the team to adequately align with programs and services. The Council board has 14 voting seats filled and three vacancies, as well as three ex-officio members including Lt. Governor Tahesha Way, Senator Holly T. Schepisi, and Assemblyman James J. Kennedy.

The staff is organized in four units with distinct but overlapping responsibilities: Grants & Strategies, Operations & Technical Assistance, Communications, and Community Partnerships & Artist Services. Each unit head reports to the Executive Director. The Executive Director reports to the Council Chair and, within the DOS, to the Lt. Governor/Secretary of State. The Council's purchase of goods and services, personnel matters, processing of payments, system of accounting, and IT are all coordinated through the DOS.

Public funding for the arts through the State Arts Council comes from two main sources: The New Jersey State Budget and the federally funded National Endowment for the Arts

- State Budget Cultural Projects Appropriation: A percentage of the dedicated, renewable revenue from the Hotel/Motel Occupancy Fee provides annual funding for arts grants in all New Jersey counties, derived from revenue the sector helps to generate statewide.
- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA): Every year, the Council applies for and receives a State Partnership Agreement grant, helping to ensure the broadest reach of federal dollars in service to and support for all citizens.

The dollars distributed through the State Arts Council positively impact individuals, families, businesses, and communities in all 21 counties. Millions of residents and visitors, hundreds of nonprofit arts organizations, hundreds of thousands of artists and arts sector workers, and countless related industries rely on the State Arts Council to strategically, equitably, and responsibly invest public resources – human and financial – to help build a better New Jersey.

## FY26 BUDGET

REVENUE SOURCES	
Cultural Projects Appropriation	\$ 31,900,000
National Endowment for the Arts Grant	\$ 1,297,538
Administration Appropriation	\$ 455,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 33,652,538</b>
EXPENDITURES	
<b>Administrative Budget</b>	<b>\$ 2,524,359</b>
<b>Available for Grants</b>	<b>\$ 31,128,179</b>

The Council enters FY26 with a \$31,900,000 Cultural Projects Appropriation (CPA), and an Administrative Appropriation of \$455,000. State Budget language allows for up to 5% of the CPA to be spent on administrative costs, which helps the Council build internal operations and support non-grants services for the field. The FY26 Administrative budget is \$2,524,359, which includes the DOS projection of salaries for Council staff, as well as non-salary costs, and a roster of public services.

The Council has been awarded \$1,297,538 from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). This State Partnership Agreement grant supports Council programs and services statewide, with special focus on underserved communities, arts education, folk arts, and Poetry Out Loud.

In FY26 the Council will, as always, operate in three fiscal years at once, carrying out the administrative processes for multiple grant programs, upholding high standards of accountability, efficiency, and public service. We will continue to focus on improving access to information and resources, including through the refinement of field programs and services, as well as ongoing upgrades to SAGE (DOS electronic grants system) for applicants and grantees.

This Plan is an updated version of the Plan adopted by the Council at its July 22, 2025 Annual Meeting. Adjustments reflect the inclusion of a grant from the NEA that was unconfirmed at the time. All principles and priorities remain as previously approved, and updated available resources are distributed in accordance with the actions approved at the Council Meeting on August 19, 2025. This plan, along with the Annual Meeting reports, will constitute the Council's Annual Report to the Governor, Legislature, and the citizens of New Jersey.

## FY26 PRIORITIES BACKGROUND

Every year, the State Arts Council supports hundreds of nonprofit arts organizations, helping to employ and strengthen the careers of thousands of artists and culture workers, and serving millions of visitors and residents across the state. Council dollars made possible 980 grants last year – a combination of 375 direct grants to artists and organizations and an additional 605

grants through our 21 County Arts Agency partners. FY26 numbers are projected to be similar. For FY26, the Council remains committed to being a reliable source not only of funding, but also leadership, contributing to resilience and innovation statewide. New Jersey's arts industry is many things. And while the arts look different across the state - in neighborhoods, cities, and towns – in each place we see a commitment to community. The Council will continue to work with colleagues locally and nationally to uphold the priority that arts venues, programs, and events remain welcoming, inclusive spaces for patrons, artists, and staff of all ages and from all walks of life.

The majority of Council grants provide the type of funding most challenging for nonprofits to find: multiyear, flexible support to help organizations pay for basic operations in service to their missions. FY25 was the first of the multiyear cycle of the Council's largest programs, General Operating Support and General Program Support (GOS and GPS). While funding requests for GOS and GPS far out-weighed available resources, the Council distributed over \$20 million in operating grants alone, signaling a historic mark of progress, helping to grow stability in the field, and helping New Jersey maintain footing as a state rich with vibrant cultural assets and attractions.

Ensuring access to State Arts Council dollars beyond the borders of GOS and GPS eligibility, the Council's Local Arts Program (LAP) centers on the partnerships with 21 designated County Arts Agencies who regrant Council funds in their local communities. LAP will begin a new multiyear grant cycle in FY26 with renewed focus on strengthening communication, data sharing, and capacity building to better understand the network's challenges and opportunities for impact.

New and renewed programs in FY26 focus on arts learning, creative aging, arts and healing, cultural access, public art, economic development, and more. Through a portfolio of annual and multiyear grants and services carried out in partnership with organizations within the arts and across sectors, the Council widens the resources applied to a variety of issues and contributes to an evolving infrastructure of statewide support.

Building on lessons learned and field input, the Council will continue to strengthen its commitment to access and equity in grantmaking and services to the field. This includes streamlined processes, longer timelines, diversified communications, and a robust schedule of public assistance. In addition to grant assistance services, the Council maintains a roster of targeted professional development offerings, serving thousands of individuals, professional teams, and cross-sector administrators.

Recognizing the unique position of the arts as a force for positive change, the Council will continue to find innovative ways to invest in the artists at the heart of our state's creative industries. This year, we will recognize working artists statewide through Individual Artist Fellowship grants, and award the second cohort of Heritage Fellows to honor and preserve our State's highly diverse cultural heritage. Multiple and varied commission opportunities for public art projects will engage a range of artists, both emerging and established, in telling our shared stories, celebrating our differences, and shaping our communities.

New Jersey is one of the most densely populated, diverse states in the nation, and home to a dynamic arts sector that fosters opportunities for self-expression, innovation, and inspiration, offering inroads to address complex issues we all care about – high quality education, healthy aging, thriving economies, booming tourism, cross-cultural understanding, and so much more.

As the largest funder of the arts in New Jersey, the Council is responsible for the development and delivery of grant programs and services that are equitable, accessible, and have the greatest possible impact statewide. The priorities listed below, created within the context of the Council's [Strategic Plan \(2023-2028\)](#), describe the areas of work to which staff and board have committed and are the guide for the development of individual work plans for the year.

## **FY26 PRIORITIES**

Creating a strategy of grants and services that is responsive to the needs and opportunities in the sector today is the highest priority as we look to capitalize on the momentum of positive change both internally and in the field. With state and federal dollars, the Council will invest in New Jersey communities, families, and individuals through targeted grant programs and professional services that help ensure access to meaningful arts experiences in trusted and new ways. For more information about the programs and services named below, please see the Programs and Services Summary Appendix, which begins on page 7.

### **1. Make grants to organizations and artists that strengthen the arts sector and contribute to statewide vitality in equitable and accessible ways. (LRSP Goal 1, 4)**

- Administer the second year of the Council's largest, multiyear GOS and GPS grant programs to fund basic operations for organizations in all counties and all artistic disciplines.
- Administer the first year of the multiyear Local Arts Program to extend the reach of Council funds through the 21 County Arts Agencies and contribute to local arts development.
  - Assess the changing needs of the 21 CAA partners and the hundreds of regrantees and communities they serve, to optimize the impact of the program overall.
- Maintain and evolve customized project grants in areas including arts education and lifelong learning, sector equity and diversity, arts promotion, folk and traditional arts, and cultural access.
  - FY26 includes the launch and/or management of: Creative Aging Initiative, NJ Arts & Culture Administrators of Color Network, State of the Arts, NJ Folklife Centers Network, Folk Arts Roundtable, Poetry Out Loud, and Cultural Access Network.
- Provide financial support for individual artists through the Fellowship programs and continue to foster professional development, commission, and showcase opportunities.
  - FY26 includes the launch and/or management of: the Individual Artist Fellowship program, Arts Annual Exhibition, Senior Citizen Art Show, Folk & Traditional Arts Project grants (FY27), Heritage Fellowships, and Heritage Fellowship Features.

**2. Provide professional services for the field based on current needs and opportunities.**

*(LRSP Goals 1, 2, 3, 4)*

- Maximize opportunities to engage NJ artists in shaping our state's public spaces:
  - Manage the artist selection process for State-financed construction projects as indicated in the Public Buildings Arts Inclusion Act. Public Building Arts Inclusion projects continue to increase.
  - Develop and partner on nationally recognized public art projects including the Public Art Archive, Community-Based Art Grant Program (NJDEP), the TRANSITional Art Project, Revolutionary Acts (250<sup>th</sup>), and more.
- Continued support for the field beyond grants through technical assistance programs and professional services shaped through public input.
  - FY26 programs and services include: grant workshops and office hours for organizations and individuals, professional development for artists/teaching artists, Communities of Practice, Critical Financial Services, Making It Public, Call for Entry (CaFE), ArtsPay NJ, Business of Being an Artist, and Arts Education Census Project.
  - In partnership with the Nonprofit Finance Fund, assess arts sector operational data to get a clear picture of the changes in sector financial health.
- Cultivate statewide and national partnerships including those that focus on education, aging, economic development, preparedness, health and wellness, access, and equity.
  - FY26 partnerships include: Families First Discovery Pass, Transit Village Initiative, NJ Economic Development Authority, Council of NJ Grantmakers/Culture Funders, Creating Healthy Communities, and National Assembly of State Arts Agencies' Arts Education Working Group.
  - Serve as a connector, partner, and advocate to leverage additional resources and support for the arts sector and to address priority issues.
- Develop and share new resource for serving systems- and justice-impacted youth through the arts, in partnership with the Juvenile Justice Commission and others, as indicated in legislation.

**3. Grow the Council's multifaceted communications strategy with enhanced tools, information, and materials. *(LRSP Goal 3)***

- Maintain effective promotion, education, and communications about diverse arts opportunities, events, artists, and communities statewide.
  - FY26 resources include: Year in Review, Long-Range Strategic Plan, and Opportunities for the Field
- Evaluate and adapt communications assets and practices to serve changing needs in the field, including web, social, and print content.
  - Working with the DOS, improve access to information on the Council's website.
- Continue to standardize data collection and use related to agency services, engagement, and impact, as well as national and statewide arts-impact data and information captured through various methods such as grant reports and field research.
  - Assess feasibility and timing of grant and service data collection and availability to

- compile regular information on the reach and impact of public arts funding.
- Provide high-quality constituent relations and assistance across all teams, and support opportunities for staff and board to engage on the local, state, and national levels.
  - Maintain support for increased in-person field visits for staff and board as part of grants management, relationship-building, and sector support.
  - Continue ongoing, proactive communication with stakeholders at all levels and capture feedback for sharing.

**4. Further embrace principles of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion in grantmaking and services for public benefit. (LRSP Goals 1, 2, 3, 4)**

- Continue to assess and challenge inequities in grant programs, services, and processes.
  - Continue evaluation of the GOS and GPS programs to systematically address core elements and shape the next “top of cycle” programs to best align with agency values, accessibility, and field needs.
- Support ongoing staff and board learning and sustain opportunities to share with one another.
- Communicate publicly about agency goals, and establish accountability measures.
  - Articulate the impact of learning and change on Council programs and services, both internally and for the public, to create awareness, transparency, and accountability.
- Use available data and information to better understand agency reach, and identify gaps in engagement and service.
  - Incorporate information and data gained last year into the ongoing and new assessments of grant programs and services to ensure alignment and awareness across the agency.

**5. Build internal capacity, streamline operations, and capitalize on expertise.**

*(LRSP Goals 1, 2, 3, 4)*

- Continue to improve technical tools, including SAGE, to increase public access, simplify processes, and more effectively organize and use data.
  - Build on the progress made last year to align agency data gathering capabilities.
- Capitalize on refined internal procedures to support agency change, growth, and sustainability.
- Continue to assess and align staff capacity, and increase workflow clarity across the board.
- Build on the progress made to streamline internal communications, and foster a culture of creativity, clarity, and collaboration.

## APPENDIX



### **FY26 Programs and Services Summary**

*Current as of September 2025. [Staff contacts](#) for each item are noted below.*

#### **Grants for Organizations**

##### **Creative Aging Initiative (CAI)** (Samantha Clarke)

The Creative Aging Initiative is a grant program designed to support lifelong learning initiatives for older adults. Creative Aging Initiative grants provide \$10,000 each year, for two years, to eligible arts organizations, libraries, veterans homes, and senior and community centers to cover costs for arts learning experiences for New Jersey older adults (aged 55 and over).

##### **General Operating Support (GOS)** (Tammy Herman)

GOS grants provide support for the overall operations of organizations with missions exclusively devoted to the arts and which meet the Council's eligibility criteria. Review and consideration of GOS applications occur every three years. GOS grants are typically awarded with a three-year commitment, subject to available funds and contract stipulations.

##### **General Program Support (GPS)** (Tammy Herman)

GPS grants provide support for the operating costs of full-time, ongoing, public arts programs that meet the Council's eligibility criteria. Review and consideration of GPS applications occur every three years. GPS grants are typically awarded with a three-year commitment, subject to available funds and contract stipulations. This grant is matched 1:1.

##### **Local Arts Program (LAP)** (Andrew Binger)

Since 1979, the Council has worked with the network of 21 officially designated County Arts Agencies (CAAs) to extend the reach of State resources and increase access to the arts in communities in all corners of the state. LAP grants are typically awarded with a three-year commitment to CAAs to support local arts development, planning and administration, and to regrant funds to community-based arts organizations and projects with local impact. More than 600 such grants are made annually under grant programs designed and administered by the respective CAA. Any funds received by the CAA that are not regranted are matched 1:1.

#### **Grants for Artists**

##### **Folk & Traditional Arts Project** (Sally Van de Water)

This project-focused grant program aims to help ensure the survival of valued traditional art

forms in New Jersey communities by investing in emerging and mid-career folk and traditional artists, fostering access to support for building their knowledge, skills, and training in their culturally specific art form. This opportunity is offered every other year (next offered in FY27).

**New Jersey Heritage Fellowships** (Sally Van de Water)

To honor and preserve our state's diverse cultural heritage, the Council will award Heritage Fellowships to exemplary folk and traditional artists. These fellowships recognize artistic excellence, lifetime achievement, and contributions to our state's cultural heritage. Fellowship Awards are one-time, \$20,000 awards to New Jersey folk and traditional artists to help them pursue their artistic goals. This opportunity is offered every other year (offered in FY26).

**Individual Artist Fellowships (IAF)** (Stephanie Nerbak)

Fellowships provide financial support to New Jersey artists in 13 artistic disciplines to help them produce new work and advance their careers. The anonymous review process is focused solely on artistic quality as determined by independent review panels. The program is carried out in partnership with Mid Atlantic Arts. Awards are made in the winter and follow a calendar year.

**Cosponsored Projects (CSP)**

**One way the Council achieves its goals of service to the entire state is annual and multiyear, Cosponsored Projects. CSP support focuses on priority areas, approached in partnership, such as arts access, arts education, artist services, and economic and community development.**

**Arts Annual** (Stephanie Nerbak)

Since 1984, the Council has cosponsored this series of exhibitions highlighting the work of artists living or working in New Jersey. One exhibition takes place each year in partnership with a New Jersey museum or gallery.

**Critical Financial Services** (Tammy Herman)

Cosponsored with the Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF), this program is aimed at gaining a comprehensive understanding of the financial health and trends of the nonprofit arts industry and assisting organizations in achieving greater financial health. NFF provides Audit Review & Financial Summaries (ARFS) based on a thorough assessment of grantee financial health, and provides workshops, webinars, and small group financial leadership clinics for grantees to build foundational knowledge around financial management tools.

**Cultural Access Network Project (CAN)** (Lindsay Dandeo)

In 1992, the Council joined with the New Jersey Theatre Alliance to create what is now called the Cultural Access Network to serve organizations and individuals statewide. Since its inception, the Cultural Access Network has been a multifaceted resource for cultural organizations in making their programs, opportunities, and facilities accessible to individuals with disabilities, and in being compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**Making It Public (MIP)** (Stephanie Nerbak)

In partnership with Forecast Public Art, the Council hosts free, virtual workshops open to New



Jersey artists at all career levels and of all disciplines who are interested in expanding their art-making practice into public spaces.

**New Jersey Arts & Culture Administrators of Color (NJACAC)** (Jessica Gaines)

Established in 2019 and led by the New Jersey Theatre Alliance, the New Jersey Arts & Culture Administrators of Color is a network of professional arts administrators of color created to advance efforts related to equity, diversity, and inclusion within New Jersey's arts community. The Council is a founding partner of the initiative, working with the Alliance and ArtPride New Jersey to build a community that affords members the opportunity to develop personal and professional connections, share resources, and foster emerging leaders.

**New Jersey Folklife Centers Network** (Sally Van de Water)

The network of regional folklife centers conduct regional fieldwork and present programs to preserve and highlight the diversity of folk and traditional arts practiced statewide. The Council works with the State's five Folklife Centers: Folklife Center of Northern NJ (Paterson), The Regional Folklife Center at The Arts Institute of Middlesex County (New Brunswick), Jersey Shore Folklife Center (Tuckerton), Down Jersey Folklife Center (Millville), and New Jersey Folklife at Perkins (Collingswood and Moorestown).

**Poetry Out Loud (POL)** (Samantha Clarke)

POL is a national poetry recitation program sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation and implemented by state and jurisdictional arts councils across the country. The Council sponsors NJPOL and works closely with Count Basie Center for the Arts and a network of partners to maximize the impact of the program. POL encourages the nation's youth to learn about poetry through memorization and performance, while gaining public speaking skills, building self-confidence, and learning about their literary heritage. All NJ public, charter, private, and parochial high schools, and home school associations are invited to participate. NJPOL can be facilitated in school classrooms, after school, through community organizations, and libraries by a teacher, teaching artist, or program facilitator.

**Revolutionary Acts** (Danielle Bursk)

In partnership with Monument Lab, New Jersey Historical Commission, and RevolutionNJ, the Council will commission a new performance series – *Revolutionary Acts* – that will animate stories of the American Revolution in time for the 250th anniversary in 2026. A selected artist will create performance-based work that will unfold across specific, historically significant sites in Camden, Trenton, and Fort Lee, and work with local community partners to activate these locations, weaving together stories of the state's and nation's past, present, and future.

**Senior Citizen Art Show** (Stephanie Nerbak)

For more than 50 years, the Council has administered the Senior Citizen Art Show because the arts and creative expression are important throughout a lifetime. The Show includes artists from all 21 counties, made possible by a multiagency partnership, coordinated since 2014 by the Mercer County Division of Culture & Heritage. The winners from each county show are exhibited at the Meadow Lakes Senior Living Community and on the program website.

### **State of the Arts** (Michelle Baxter-Schaffer)

*State of the Arts*, the Emmy Award-winning weekly, half-hour television show, debuted on NJN Public Television in 1981, and aired as a coproduction of NJN and the Council until 2011. Now airing as a cornerstone program of NJTV Public Media NJ, the new episodes are coproduced by the Council and Stockton University, in partnership with PCK Media. *State of the Arts* goes on location with creative personalities and productions and is recognized as one of the premier arts programs on public television, with more than 30 Mid-Atlantic and NY Emmys to its credit.

### **TRANSITional Art Project (TAP)** (Danielle Bursk)

In partnership with NJ TRANSIT, the Council created the TRANSITional Art Project, a temporary public art program specifically for transportation centers in New Jersey. The goals of TAP are to connect NJ TRANSIT customers and the surrounding community by bringing new and exciting experiences to the spaces customers pass through every day, as well as providing New Jersey artists exhibition opportunities and a supportive environment in which to create public art.

## **Services**

### **Arts Inclusion Program** (Danielle Bursk)

Since the passage of the Public Buildings Arts Inclusion Act in 1978, this program has led to the commissioning and installation of hundreds of artworks in state-financed construction projects of state buildings. Up to 1.5% of the construction budget is set aside for this purpose. The Council assists state agencies and state universities in the selection of artists for all projects including those for NJ TRANSIT's Transit Arts Program. Announcements of Arts Inclusion Projects are publicized through [CaFE](#) and listed under the "Public Art" category when available.

### **ArtsPay NJ** (Lindsay Dandeo and Diane Felcyn)

ArtsPay NJ is a collaborative project which addresses issues of pay equity, staff retention, and sector sustainability in the NJ arts and cultural community. The Council supported the initiative's first and second round of data collection, reports and tools, including statewide surveys and a public, interactive website dashboard of compensation, benefits, job satisfaction, and demographics of arts workers in NJ. Key findings include pay gaps among gender and race, access to health insurance, and more. This project is coordinated in partnership with the arts service organizations of New Jersey: ArtPride NJ, Arts Ed NJ, Dance NJ, NJ Theatre Alliance, NJ Association of Museums, and South Jersey Cultural Alliance.

### **Best Practices Guide for Systems- and Justice-Impacted Youth** (Samantha Clarke)

Recently passed legislation assigns the Council with the responsibility to research and develop a guide for utilizing community-based arts learning programming to support systems- and justice-impacted youth in the state of New Jersey. Working in coordination with the Juvenile Justice Commission, the Division of Child and Protection and Permanency in the Department of Children and Families, the Council will disseminate the guide to stakeholders in the field.

### **Communities of Practice (COP)** (Tammy Herman)

The Council's roster includes organizations with diverse areas of focus and a wide range of

organizational capacity. Recognizing this diversity and the organic cohorts that come together, the Council created “Communities of Practice” to help organizations with similar traits or missions share best practices, concerns, and ideas in order to build opportunities and strengthen the field as a whole. To date, COPs have been developed around high-capacity organizations, arts education organizations, teaching artists, service organizations, and those seeking to build financial capacity. Each COP is supported by Council staff.

**Families First Discovery Pass (FFDP)** (Chris Benincasa)

In 2018, the Council and the NJ Historical Commission partnered with the NJ Departments of Human Services (DHS) and Health (DOH) to launch NJ’s first Families First Discovery Pass program. This program provides families and individuals enrolled in state assistance programs (SNAP, WFNJ, and/or WIC) with free or highly discounted admission to arts and history organizations, venues, and programs statewide. FFDP offers broad access to cultural experiences for residents and helps cultural organizations engage and build new audiences.

**Folk Arts Roundtable** (Sally Van de Water)

A multiday professional development convening for individuals working in the folk and traditional arts in New York and New Jersey. Training and discussion topics include programming formats, arts education, folk art and community health, place-based folklife, archiving and fieldwork, and access and inclusion. The event is sponsored, in part, by the Council as well as the NY State Council on the Arts, NY Folklore, and the NEA.

**Opportunities for the Field** (Chris Benincasa)

Opportunities for the Field, the Council’s monthly newsletter, is a compilation of opportunities for artists and arts organizations that are available in NJ or benefit those working in the arts in NJ. Listings include professional development, grant announcements, calls for artists, and more.

**Performing Arts Readiness (PAR)** (Andrew Binger)

PAR was launched in January 2017 through a grant from the Mellon Foundation, and the Council was one of the founding partners. Formed in the recognition that performing arts organizations are especially vulnerable to disasters and emergencies which can halt performances, and can put an organization out of business overnight, the project includes outreach and community engagement, information resources, mentoring programs, and grants.

**Public Art Archive** (Danielle Bursk)

By undertaking this online archive of public art from across the state, the Council aims to make New Jersey’s vast collection of art in public spaces easy to find and enjoy. This [online tool](#) provides open access to public art for anyone visiting, studying, or passing by, and helps residents locate art in their own communities.

**The Business of Being an Artist** (Samantha Clarke, Stephanie Nerbak, and Sally Van de Water)

The Council hosts this annual, multipart series of professional learning for artists. *The Business of Being an Artist* series is free and open to any artist, teaching artist, or folk artist who lives and/or works in New Jersey. Sessions are led by local and national experts, covering topics such as

writing artist statements, crowdfunding, health insurance options, and more.

## **Partnerships**

### **Community-Based Art Grant Program** (Danielle Bursk)

With funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Council partners with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection to develop and implement the Community-Based Art Grant Program. The program addresses the need to involve and inform the public about coastal hazard impacts and risk reduction by offering grants to organizations to work with artists to create temporary public art projects that engage the community.

### **Council of NJ Grantmakers Culture Funders** (Tammy Herman)

The CNJG Culture Funders Affinity Group includes private and public grantmakers working in the arts and humanities across NJ. It aims to maximize the leadership potential and grantmaking abilities of those interested in developing a strong and thriving arts community in New Jersey. The Council's Director of Grants & Strategies is the Co-Chair of the Affinity Group.

### **Creating Healthy Communities** (Andrew Binger and Samantha Clarke)

The Creating Healthy Communities Convening will be the third of its kind to bring together colleagues dedicated to creating healthier, more equitable communities through cross-sector collaboration in arts in public health in the U.S. Hosted in New Jersey for the first time, the convening is a collaboration between NJPAC, the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine, and Pabst Steinmetz Foundation. Council support of the Convening will help ensure broad, equitable access for artists and administrators living or working in New Jersey.

### **National Assembly of State Arts Agencies' Arts Education Working Group** (Samantha Clarke)

New Jersey will serve as the co-chair and chair in FY26 for NASAA's Arts Education Working Group. The group is responsible for the planning and implementation of the annual Professional Development Institute, which gathers arts education managers from all 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies for in-person leadership development and technical assistance. The co-chair/chair will also gather the Mid-Atlantic region in bi-monthly meetings that will support arts education managers throughout the region and implement services for the field.

### **New Jersey Arts & Culture Renewal Fund** (Tammy Herman)

Originally named the NJ Arts and Culture Recovery Fund, NJACRF was established in 2020 to ensure the survival and strength of the state's arts and history sectors during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund changed its name in 2022 to reflect its focus on supporting the arts and history sectors through sustained, equitable grantmaking to nonprofit organizations most vulnerable to sector disruptions. The Council is a cofounder of NJACRF.

### **Transit Village Initiative (TVI)** (Andrew Binger)

The NJ Department of Transportation and NJ TRANSIT lead the TVI, a multi-agency Smart Growth partnership. The TVI creates incentives for municipalities to redevelop or revitalize the areas around transit stations using design standards of transit-oriented development (TOD).

TOD helps municipalities create attractive, vibrant, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods where people can live, work, shop, and play without relying on automobiles.