



Fast Facts

MISSION

The Ohio Arts Council is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally, and economically.

VISION

Providing leadership and voice for the arts to transform people and communities.

HISTORY

The Ohio Arts Council was created in 1965 to foster and encourage the development of the arts and assist the preservation of Ohio's cultural heritage. With funds from the Ohio legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts, the OAC provides financial assistance to artists and arts organizations. The Council accomplishes this charge in two primary methods—first, through the various grant funding programs that the Council operates to provide support to artists and to make arts activities available to a broad segment of Ohio's public; and second, by providing services that help to enhance the growth of the arts.

STATE ARTS PLAN

[Essentials Plan 2021](#) is the agency's strategic plan for 18 months, spanning January 2021 through June 2022. It lays out a way forward for the agency through four pillars: invest, engage, innovate, and lead, which guide program prioritization and resource deployment. The *Essentials Plan* positions the OAC to remain relevant, responsive, and nimble as the state's artists and arts organizations face new and unexpected challenges to their stability, resiliency, and resolve.

ABOUT OUR BOARD

The OAC Board is composed of 15 voting members appointed by the governor, and four non-voting members—two from the Ohio Senate and House of Representatives. The Board is responsible for final approval of funding requests. It meets quarterly, and all meetings are open to the public.

APPROPRIATIONS

State Appropriations: The arts are a proven economic driver. They attract new business, support tourism, and create and retain jobs. In recognition of this, the governor and state legislature have recently granted significant increases in state funding to the OAC, enabling the agency to fund the arts in all 88 counties.

Fiscal Year	GRF Appropriation	Percent Increase
FY 2022-2023	\$40,000,000	+19.1%
FY 2020-2021	\$33,578,893	+14.6%
FY 2018-2019	\$29,307,904	+1.3%
FY 2016-2017	\$28,944,100	+27.5%
FY 2014-2015	\$22,698,408	+31.9%
FY 2012-2013	\$17,211,408	+30.5%

Federal Appropriations: For 12 years running, the OAC has earned one of the top three largest federal grant from the NEA for state arts agencies in the nation. NEA grants typically total around \$2 million biennially, and 100% of the agency's federal funding is invested in individuals and organizations via grants.

ALL OHIOANS BENEFIT FROM THE ARTS: A Strong, Innovative Investment

- **Ohio's arts infrastructure generates economic benefits.** The arts are a proven economic driver and one of our state's greatest selling points. They attract new business and a talented workforce, support tourism, create and retain jobs, and produce tax revenue.
 - Recent research from Bowling Green State University shows that, prior to COVID-19, **Ohio's creative industries support nearly 290,000 jobs, contribute almost \$41 billion to the state's economy, and generate approximately \$4.6 billion in annual tax revenues** (federal, state, and local combined). With continued investment and support, these jobs and economic indicators will rebound and grow.
- **COVID-19 has had a vast, negative impact on Ohio's arts sector, among the worst affected in terms of economic loss and unemployment. Businesses in Ohio's creative economy have lost \$3.3 billion, and Ohio's creative workers have lost \$1.8 billion,** according to Americans for the Arts.
- **But the arts are resilient. Early reinvestment will be central and powerful to sparking a strong, broad, shared economic recovery in Ohio.** The OAC has taken action. Our agency has distributed \$20 million in one-time CARES Act relief and worked to help obtain and invest an additional \$1 million in special regional and federal aid for the arts. In addition, the OAC regularly provides information about external grant opportunities to get organizations and artists back to work.
- **The agency's FY 2022-2023 appropriations are forward-looking.** While one-time relief efforts in FY 2021 were critical to the arts sector's survival, the FY 2022-2023 budget looks to the future—toward the return of in-person arts programming, toward expanded digital experiences, toward arts education resuming safely in classrooms, toward the restoration of jobs and calling back laid-off or furloughed arts professionals.
- **The arts strengthen education.** The arts aid success inside and outside the classroom, preparing students to succeed in an economy driven by innovation and creativity. Ongoing research confirms a **positive relationship between arts education and improved academics**—from better math and reading skills, to higher standardized test scores and graduation rates. An education that includes the arts helps to **train our workforce and produce creative, critical thinkers and problem-solvers that are attractive to employers.**
- **Ohio Arts Council grants are an investment in creative capital that flows throughout Ohio's communities.** Artistic professionals come in all stripes—architects, graphic designers, craftsmen and craftswomen, and marketing and branding teams. **Artists themselves are entrepreneurs and run businesses and galleries.** They buy local and make communities better places to live, work, play, and raise families.
- **Ohioans know their tax dollars are invested in the arts—and strongly support their continued investment.** According to a recent OAC statewide public survey, **91% of Ohioans believe public funds should be invested in the arts and 83% know that public funds support the arts in Ohio.**
- **The arts are crucial to a community's vitality, bridging divides and bringing people together.** Engagement in the arts creates an authentic and lasting shared identity, fostering a sense of place and state and local pride. Incorporating the arts into sustainability initiatives—like housing, transportation, health, parks and open spaces, and schools—improves the impact of other state policies and services. Sharing creative experiences **connects people across socioeconomic, cultural, and geographic lines.**