



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

[State Arts Plan 2020](#) was created in response to the needs of everyday Ohioans. Informed by focus groups, one-on-one interviews, site visits to organizations and communities, and a statewide survey of all 88 counties—*State Arts Plan 2020* serves as the foundation for the agency's future. Four goals: INVEST, ENGAGE, INNOVATE, and LEAD underpin the plan, guiding program prioritization and resource deployment.

ABOUT OUR BOARD

The OAC Board is composed of 15 voting members appointed by the governor, and four non-voting members—two each from the Ohio Senate and House of Representatives. The Board is responsible for final approval of funding requests. It meets four times annually, and all meetings are open to the public. Notification of the time and place of the regularly scheduled meetings is made available to the general public through announcements in [OAC News](#).

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.

Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Percent Increase
FY 2018-2019	\$29,307,758	+0.9%
FY 2016-2017	\$29,048,479	+28.0%
FY 2014-2015	\$22,698,408	+31.9%
FY 2012-2013	\$17,211,408	+30.5%

Federal Appropriations: For seven years running, the OAC has earned the second-largest federal grant from the NEA for state arts agencies in the nation, exceeded only by California due to its larger population. 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

Ohio's arts infrastructure generates economic benefits. Recent research shows that Ohio's creative industries support more than 231,000 jobs, contribute more than \$25 billion to the state's economy, and generate more than \$2.8 billion in annual tax revenues (federal, state, and local combined).

The OAC leverages a high match ratio from its grantees. \$56 in local and private funding matches every one OAC dollar.

The arts play a central role in economic development and job creation in Ohio. In addition to giving communities unique cultural identities, the arts and cultural industries:

- are fast-growing, dynamic clusters of economic activity that aid the growth of businesses
- aid in the retention and development of an innovative and skilled workforce and the transformation of local economies into innovation centers
- spur strong public-private partnerships that catalyze community revitalization in urban and rural areas alike
- produce resilient, entrepreneurial jobs suited to making mature industries become more competitive
- are competitive export industries closely connected to tourism

The arts strengthen education. The arts aid success both 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 improved 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 from local businesses 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.