

The Arts Sector and COVID-19 Relief

March 2020

Community by community, the COVID-19 crisis is rapidly affecting the creative sector, its workforce, and the communities it serves. As Congress and the Administration consider new forms of federal economic assistance that may be targeted or widespread, we urge support for business continuity relief and support for the arts workforce that will sustain the arts sector's unique capacity to support the U.S. economy, uplift the human spirit, and provide lifelong learning.

- Arts organizations serve artistic and educational missions through the work of administrators, artists, writers, educators, designers, technicians, publishers, producers, agents, managers, and others who work in full-time, part-time, hourly, seasonal, and freelance capacities. Together, they are vital contributors to the nonprofit sector, support and fuel local business, and are essential to the economy of the communities they serve.
- Just this month, the Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that the arts and culture workforce contributed \$877.8 billion, or 4.5 percent, to the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2017.
- The unexpected loss of event-dependent revenue and income for the full range of people who make up the workforce of the arts and the declines in charitable contributions are immediately impacting arts organizations and individual livelihoods, and will worsen over time.
- Federal relief in response to COVID-19 should ensure the viability of nonprofit arts organizations, artists, and the creative sector is addressed, including:
 - Access to multiple forms of stimulus funding aimed at community development, nonprofit arts and small business continuity, and relief for self-employed individuals, as well as dedicated funding administered by the National Endowment for the Arts to accomplish these goals.
 - Paid leave and unemployment relief provisions for employees and self-employed workers that support both the arts workforce and the arts organizations that hire them.
 - Rapid, streamlined access to SBA disaster relief loans and FEMA disaster assistance for arts organizations, cultural sector small businesses, and self-employed individuals.
 - Enhanced deductions for charitable contributions to support continuity plans for nonprofit arts organizations and their workforce, such as a universal charitable deduction, available to all taxpayers.

Investing in the arts sector is an investment in our nation's capacity to generate creative solutions to complex problems, support the health and well-being of communities, educate and inspire lifelong learners, and drive economic activity. The arts sector is innovating to provide online arts experiences and distance learning opportunities and will be an essential partner in jump-starting local, state, and national recovery efforts during and after COVID-19, and should be supported by all forms of relief.

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Alliance of Artists Communities
American Alliance of Museums
American Composers Forum
American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada
Americans for the Arts
Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts
Association of Art Museum Directors
Association of Performing Arts Professionals
Carnegie Hall
CERF+ -- The Artists Safety Net
Chamber Music America
Chorus America
Dance/USA
Early Music America
Folk Alliance International
Future of Music Coalition
League of American Orchestras
LitNet
Local Learning: The National Network for Folk Arts in Education
National Alliance for Musical Theatre
National Art Education Association
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures (NALAC)
National Coalition for Arts' Preparedness & Emergency Response
National Council for the Traditional Arts
National Performance Network
Network of Ensemble Theaters
New Music USA
New York Foundation for the Arts
OPERA America
PEN America
Performing Arts Alliance
Performing Arts Readiness
Phi Beta Kappa Society
Recording Academy
Theatre Communications Group
Theatre for Young Audiences/USA