

NASAA Communications Principles

The following principles have been developed in consultation with the NASAA board and membership and have guided NASAA's communications and service strategies over the course of the current fiscal crisis.

- **Promote the value of state arts agencies.** Use NASAA's resources and relationships to promote the cultural, civic, economic and educational value of state arts agencies and to assert how state arts agencies benefit communities and state government.
- **Do not perpetuate the notion that slashing state arts agency budgets is normal or responsible public policy.** Promote the benefits of state arts agencies and report accurately on their cuts, but do not lend weight to speculation about worst-case scenarios.
- **Do not "stir the pot" by generating media or legislative attention about the SAA budget crises.** Members want to control their own communications and advocacy, and NASAA's role is to complement and empower that work. State conditions differ, making coverage that is useful for one state harmful for another. Also, heightened attention to cuts may be counterproductive for those states that are holding their own or protecting resource growth.
- **Focus on arming members with the necessary arguments and information.** Provide talking points and evidence, then help individual members adapt those messages to their particular circumstances.
- **Provide customized communications assistance to members.** This has included legislative testimony, letters of support, special data analyses, advocacy coaching and assistance with media inquiries. To ensure that we are working in sync with members, NASAA always seeks guidance from the state arts agency before responding to requests from their media, state advocacy groups or government representatives.
- **Provide balanced and accurate information.** Be a voice of reason and stick to the facts.
- **Look forward.** Prioritize near-term situational assistance to members, but do not neglect the long-term picture. Help state arts agencies to adapt to change, to cultivate stronger working relationships with advocacy groups and to position themselves for success over time.