

# National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

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## Dues Policies and Procedures

According to NASAA bylaws (Article I, Section 2), "The Members of the Assembly may from time to time establish, alter and amend such membership fees as are required for the operation of the corporation."

### What Do Dues Pay for?

NASAA membership dues account for 30-35% of NASAA's core revenues and form the backbone of support for the organization, subsidizing in one way or another nearly every activity NASAA undertakes. A portion of dues revenues are also used to match the national services grant NASAA receives from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

**Research and information sharing** accounts for more than 30% of our budget and are the basis for the majority of NASAA's services. Dues pay for the annual *State Arts Agency Revenues Report*, collection and analysis of comprehensive information about state arts agencies (SAAs), and most importantly, the answers to your questions. While NASAA staff answers hundreds of information requests each year, the requests of members receive the highest priority. NASAA dues coupled with NEA support pays for the massive task of assembling and distributing information about your grant making. This includes technical assistance for the National Standard for Arts Information Exchange through group workshops and state site visits as well as annual Final Descriptive Reports analysis.

Dues pay for the **representation of your interests** with national policymakers, legislators, arts service and government service organizations, and federal executive branch personnel. NASAA provides legislative updates, policy briefings, think tank reports, reports on NEA panel activities, and publications such as *Why Should Government Support the Arts*, State Policy Briefs and National Governors Association Issue Briefs.

**NASAA dues support leadership and governance activities.** Dues pay for meetings of the NASAA board and executive committee, ensuring that individual SAA budgets are not a barrier to member participation. Staff time, travel and logistical planning in support of NASAA's annual conference and leadership institutes are subsidized through dues, without which registration fees would be prohibitive for many members. Dues help pay for NASAA's basic administrative expenses: rent, supplies, equipment, accounting and audit services. Much of our non-dues income can be steered directly to program services because these basic expenses are paid for.

### How Are Dues Amounts Determined?

The current dues structure was created to assess **dues based on a state arts agency's ability to pay**. The structure was developed and has been consistently reviewed in a highly participatory fashion, most recently in 2010 when the membership approved dues levels through 2015.

**Each member agency's annual dues assessment is based on its legislative appropriation for the previous fiscal year.** That is, an agency's NASAA membership fees for FY2015 are based on its FY2014 state government appropriation, minus line items. Understanding that a variety of factors can change an agency's original appropriation during the course of a year, NASAA dues calculations are based on a spring appropriations update

conducted toward the end of state fiscal years. Knowing that the current year legislative appropriations will determine next year's dues levels allows SAAs to plan ahead for budgeting dues.

### **When Are We Invoiced, and When Should We Pay?**

Each agency's legislative appropriation figure (*minus line items*) is used to calculate dues for the upcoming fiscal year. Dues invoices typically go out in early June. Members should remit dues as early as possible, ideally before the end of NASAA's first quarter (December 31). This enables NASAA to better manage cash-flow and matching requirements, as the organization depends on many other revenue sources with varying degrees of predictability.

NASAA understands that the administrative and budgeting structures of some SAAs require that they remit membership fees later in the year. Members paying later in the year should notify NASAA of their intentions and, if possible, inform NASAA staff of when they expect to remit payment. Such arrangements are not unusual, and will ensure continuation of membership services throughout the fiscal year.

Some SAAs have chosen to pay dues through the awarding of grants or contracts to NASAA. This is perfectly acceptable, and NASAA will fulfill the application and reporting requirements according to your agency's guidelines.

### **Is There a Forum for Discussing General Dues Issues?**

Questions about dues should be directed to NASAA Chief Advancement Officer [Laura Smith](#).

Dues levels and general membership fees issues are taken up each year when the Planning and Budget Committee convenes. Recommendations of the committee are forwarded to the NASAA board for discussion and approval, and then to the full membership if further discussion or approval is required.

For members believing their agency to be in unique circumstances, the NASAA Executive Committee is the vehicle for seeking an appropriate resolution to dues payment issues.