Providing responses to member questions—often within 24 hours—is an important component of NASAA’s daily work. In fiscal year 2021, NASAA staff fulfilled 467 information requests from state and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs), partners and the public, answering questions about arts funding, the impact of the arts, and research available to support planning, evaluation, program design and policy decision making. This is a rate of almost two requests per business day. For more on the types of questions NASAA receives and can answer, see the Examples of Recent Information Requests.

During the fiscal year, NASAA members and stakeholders have requested help from staff on a variety of topics and issues. The word cloud below illustrates the breadth of inquiries NASAA has answered in FY2021, highlighting the words used most frequently in questions. See the Information Requests by Category chart for a deeper analysis of the questions NASAA answered. This report also maps information requests received by state and charts them by organization type.

In addition, NASAA provides special services: speaking at statewide conferences, facilitating council meeting discussions and conducting custom research. For more information on these services, or to request information for your agency, contact Ryan Stubbs.
Information Requests by Category, 10/1/2020 to 9/30/2021

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: 79
- Advocacy: 60
- Federal Reporting: 39
- Emergency Management: 39
- SAA Executive Leadership: 38
- SAA Programs and Services: 32
- SAA Grant Making: 30
- SAA Funding: 25
- Federal Policy & Funding: 23
- Other: 20
- Strategic Planning: 17
- State Policy: 9
- NASAA Partnerships: 9
- SAA Staffing and Operations: 8
- NASAA Programs & Services: 8
- SAA Communications: 7
- Evaluation: 6
- Press: 5
- SAA Council Governance: 4
- SAA Structure & Authority: 1
- Arts and Health: 1

Note: Many COVID-19 related information requests were classified under Emergency Management.
Information Requests by Organization Type, 10/1/2020 to 9/30/2021

- State Arts Agencies: 80%
- National Endowment for the Arts: 6%
- Nonmembers: 12%
- RAOs: 1%
- Press: 1%

Information Requests Related to COVID-19, 10/1/2020 to 9/30/2021

- COVID-related information requests: 14%
- All other information requests: 86%
Examples of Recent Information Requests

Advocacy
- We’re launching a **new advocacy effort** following the election of a new governor. Can we pick your brain?
- Does NASAA do **advocacy training**, or can you recommend someone who does?
- Is there any info I can share with my legislature about the **importance of funding** the arts council in a state budget crisis (significant reduction proposed)?
- Since NASAA provides so much invaluable data (through maps and otherwise), we would love to discuss **data and mapping**.
- Our state arts agency has been slated for **restructuring** in this coming legislative session. We need help demonstrating our agency’s **return on investment** to a governor who wants to curtail the role of government. Can you help?
- Can you **map our grants by congressional district**?
- Can you provide some **advocacy talking points** and sample social media posts?
- What’s your feedback on our **legislative strategy** for a significant budget increase?
- I’m preparing to testify before my legislative budget committee. Can NASAA **review a draft of my legislative testimony**?
- Can you help us **workshop an appropriate public statement** regarding current events?

Funding
- What **funding and grant-making comparison resources** do you have?
- How many other SAAs have a **companion foundation or friends group** dedicated to raising additional revenue?
- Could you send examples of **dedicated arts license plate** programs? How much money do these programs raise?
- What are the state rankings for **per capita arts funding** this year? What is the national average for per capita arts funding?
- Are there SAAs with a **tax based dedicated revenue** stream?
- What are the **pros and cons of identifying alternative revenue sources** when facing legislative budget cuts?
- Can NASAA answer some questions about **legislative line items and general budget appropriations**?
- Do you have **historical data** on SAA legislative appropriations in my state?

Governance, Operations and Policy
- How many SAA executive directors are **appointed by the governor** and how many are hired by the arts council?
- I’m looking for some examples of how **SAA councils support diversity, equity and inclusion** initiatives of their agencies.
- Please share NASAA’s **diversity, equity and inclusion** policy statement.
- Could you review this **agenda design of an upcoming council meeting**?
- What is the typical role of SAA councils in **authorizing grant awards**?
- Would you explain the relationship between an SAA council’s **advisory and governance roles**?
- Our council is hiring a new executive director. Could you send us **salary data by budget and region**?
- Can you tell me more about NASAA’s resources for SAA staff that are **people of color**?
• Does NASAA have examples of **job descriptions** for a director of government relations?
• Could you share **organizational structures** of similarly sized SAAs?
• Which SAAs are connected to their **state cultural tourism office**?
• Can NASAA help with **onboarding our new executive director**?
• If our governor convenes a **state agency restructuring** task force, what kind of policy information could NASAA supply?
• We are updating our **council member handbook**. Do you have any models or best practices from other SAAs that you can share?
• Is NASAA able to help **guide us through capacity building and expanding our regional representation**?

**Grant Making and Nongrant Programming**
• Our council is considering our **funding formula** and would benefit greatly from reviewing other SAA formulas. Could you assist us?
• I'm compiling information about **Fellowship programs**.
• Does NASAA have best-practice suggestions about **grant panelist selection** criteria/policies?
• Does NASAA have examples of SAA grant programs that help arts groups **recover from disasters**?
• Please share your list of SAAs' **decentralized grant programs**.
• We're looking for a new **grant management system**. What do other SAAs use?
• How many SAAs offer a **stipend to their grant panelists**?
• Which SAAs have grant programs supporting **tribal entities**?
• We are examining issues of **equity and alignment within our major grant categories**. Can NASAA help us learn how other states approach these issues?
• Do you have statistics on **rural grant making**?
• Does NASAA have state-specific **race and economic equity** information?
• We are looking for examples of **arts in health care** programs. Any suggestions?
• Can you **recommend experts** to speak on breaking down structural racism in grant making?

**National Endowment for the Arts**
• What are the **eligibility criteria for National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Partnership Agreement** funding? If we change structure, could we lose our federal support?
• Can you clarify **NEA matching requirements**? My state legislature wants to know how our federal funding would be impacted if it reduces its investment in the arts.
• When is this year's **National Endowment for the Arts Partnership Agreement panel review**?
• I have some questions regarding our **NEA grantee audit**.
• Can you help us respond to an **information request from the NEA**?

**Planning, Evaluation and Research**
• Could you share **examples of other SAAs' strategic plans**?
• Can you provide **examples of SAA operational/action plans**?
• We may be facing a **legislative audit**. Have other states gone through this? What kind of data can NASAA provide?
• What is the optimal size, composition and role of a **strategic planning committee**?
• Do you have any recommendations about **strategic planning consultants**?
• We're embarking on a new strategic planning process. What **planning facilitation services** could NASAA provide?
• We need help designing a **strategic planning survey**.
Can you provide more details on data behind the Creative Economy State Profiles?

Are there examples of other states reshaping their education policy to include the arts?

Can you provide information on the demographic composition of the creative economy?

Can you provide feedback on our arts in health survey and implementation timeline?

FDR (Final Descriptive Report) Requirements

I've been tasked with preparing FDRs. Can you provide some tools and tips for preparing FDRs?

Do you have examples of guidance on reporting populations benefited?

How do "Project Activity Locations" apply to Poetry Out Loud and our apprenticeship program?

Please send me the latest edition of the Quick and Easy Guide to Field Definitions and Data Coding.

How do I account for nongrant programs in my FDR?

Should I report activity locations separately?

How do we report awards that involve fiscal agents?

Has COVID-19 affected FDR requirements or deadlines?

COVID-19 Pandemic/Relief Programs

We are preparing a brief on how the arts can support state government responses to the pandemic. Can you review our recommendations?

Do you have information on ARP (American Rescue Plan) Act supplemental funding?

Any advice for framing my request for $25 million in ARP relief funds?

What information about SAA use of ARP funds for COVID-19 relief is NASAA collecting?

How should I adapt my strategic planning process given COVID-19 and limited staff capacity?

Can you review our final report forms for CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security) Act grants?

Can you send examples of surveys other states are using to measure the impact of COVID-19?

How are SAAs adapting strategic planning practices due to the pandemic?

We want to create a relief program for artists. Do you have examples from other states that have created similar programs?

What type of emergency funding to organizations and/or individuals are other states offering?

How are states repurposing their current grants to accommodate the new reality of the pandemic?

Have any states received CARES Act funding for supplemental arts relief outside of NEA funds?

Do you have guidelines for safely reopening organizations?