

Rural Prosperity through the Arts and Creative Sector:
A Rural Action Guide for Governors and States

50-State Field Scan

Introduction

The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) is providing research and consulting services to the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA) in support of an initiative funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to better understand how the arts and creative industries can facilitate sustainable economic development in rural communities. NASAA's expertise and research—which includes a literature review, the identification of publicly available quantitative data offering a national perspective of rural economies and a 50-state field scan of rural creative economic development projects and practices—will inform the NGA's development of an expert roundtable discussion, other convenings and a publication designed to help governors and their staff support and benefit from their state's creative sector.

The results of NASAA's 50-state field scan are summarized in this document, which serves as an atlas of the many rural creative economic development programs, projects and initiatives around the country. It addresses efforts of state arts agencies as well as other state and local government agencies, nonprofit arts groups, community development organizations, chambers of commerce, foundations and other stakeholders. This field scan report does not comprehensively list of every instance of rural creative economic development in the country. Rather, it highlights examples from all 50 states of arts based development efforts that NASAA assesses to be inspiring and instructive. It also features state-focused creative economy studies that articulate and enumerate the value of such work. The most pertinent of these studies are denoted with a blue star (★).

To compile the field scan, NASAA surveyed state arts agency programs and policies, researched the projects addressed in the case studies covered in NASAA's literature review, mined its database of creative economy research and reviewed the grant-making records of state arts agencies, the NEA and foundations supporting rural communities, creative placemaking and/or creative economic development. NASAA also consulted with

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state arts agencies about exemplary arts based economic development projects being undertaken by other groups in their state, as personal perspectives offer a depth of understanding that grant records, reports and other secondary sources cannot.

NASAA welcomes additions to and feedback on the 50-state field scan. Please feel to contribute your knowledge by contacting NASAA Research Manager Paul Pietsch at paul.pietsch@nasaa-arts.org or 202-552-0844.

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Alabama State Council on the Arts

- [Black Belt Arts Initiative](#): This grant program is a partnership between the Alabama State Council on the Arts (ASCA), the Black Belt Community Foundation (BBCF) and the Black Belt Action Commission's Culture and Youth Committee. Its goals are to increase opportunities to engage with the arts, strengthen arts education and celebrate the culture of the rural Black Belt region of Alabama. The program is supported by grants ASCA awards to BBCF. In addition, ASCA directly offers grant funding and technical assistance to schools in the region.
- [DesignAlabama](#): DesignAlabama (DA) is a nonprofit organization—founded in 1987 under the wing of the Alabama State Council on the Arts (ASCA)—dedicated to educating the public about the importance of the design arts and showcasing how design thinking benefits local economies and makes communities livable, prosperous and desirable. It receives operating support from ASCA. In addition, ASCA has worked with DA on producing the annual Mayors Design Summit, which, since 2006, has convened designers and mayors from large and small communities to address design challenges, ranging from improving walkability to recovering from a natural disaster, and strategies for overcoming them. In 2015, DA received a National Endowment for the Arts Our Town grant for its [Connect-LIVE-ity Project](#), which was an effort realized through a series of design charettes to identify and elevate local assets to encourage rural tourism.

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- [Delta Creative Placemaking Initiative](#): This is a pilot project of the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) designed to help local communities and their economic development groups to connect more deeply with the arts and culture sector of the Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions in order to generate creative economic development. Through the effort, DRA is awarding grants to help small communities integrate arts and culture activities into their economic and community development strategies. Participating communities also are undertaking efforts to promote their arts and culture assets to encourage cultural tourism. In October 2017, two rural communities in Alabama received a grant from the initiative. Atmore is using the funding to develop and implement a plan to revitalize a performance venue and to encourage related community engagement. Eufaula is constructing an open-air, multipurpose venue to host arts and cultural events.
- [Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center](#): The mission of this nonprofit organization located in Camden, Alabama, "is to foster, develop, and promote economic development initiatives aimed at creating jobs and increasing the income of local residents through the marketing of arts, crafts, literature, food products, and other items unique to Alabama's Black Belt and to cultivate and provide arts education in the region." It represents more than 450 artists. It is developing a Black Belt Quilt Trail that will cross all 19 counties the organization serves in effort to spark cultural tourism in the region.
- [Rural Studio](#): This is a program of Auburn University's School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture that was established in 1993 to give architecture students hands-on educational experience while also assisting an underserved population in Alabama's Black Belt region. Since then, the program has become more focused on community oriented projects. Today, students work with rural communities to design and build structures that address local needs, such as lack of sufficient housing, community spaces and economic

opportunity. Participating students also help fundraise to realize these projects, which build infrastructure conducive to rural economic development. To date, the Rural Studio has completed more than 170 projects and educated more than 800 "Citizen Architects."

- [Pop Start](#): This is a partnership between the Coleman Center for the Arts and the University of West Alabama's James Suttles Entrepreneurship Institute that aims to encourage creative economic development in rural Alabama. The effort—which received an ArtPlace grant in 2014 as well as funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Alabama State Council on the Arts—is based in York, Alabama, a community with about 2,500 residents. It is a hybrid of a start-up incubator and a pop-up retail shop designed to support the development of artists and other creative entrepreneurs. Reclaiming an abandoned property, the space offers rotating business incubation, a cooperative market for selling home-sourced goods, a community social space, and an opportunity for artists and community members to experiment with different solutions to the economic and civic challenges facing the community.

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- [Alabama Creative Industries Profile \(Full Report\)](#) (South Arts, 2011)
- [Alabama Creative Industries Profile \(Executive Summary\)](#) (South Arts, 2011)

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Alaska State Council on the Arts

- [Alaska Native Arts Program](#): This program, which began in 1980, supports the entrepreneurship of Alaska Native artists living in rural parts of the state. It includes the [Alaska Native Artist Resource Workbook](#), a guide for developing sustainable arts businesses. The workbook—which the Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA) developed with the [CIRI Foundation](#), the nonprofit arm of the Cook Inlet Region tribal corporation—addresses effective business development and marketing practices. It also reviews state and federal laws regulating artists' use of wildlife and addresses issues of art fraud affecting Alaska Natives. The [Silver Hand seal](#), meanwhile, helps develop markets for Alaska Native artists by authenticating their work with a special seal enabling consumers to identify it. The Silver Hand seal is protected under state trademark statute and regulation. ASCA manages the branding program in partnership with the Alaska Department of Economic Development.

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- [Sitka Arts Campus](#): Alaska Arts Southeast, a longtime grantee of the Alaska State Council on the Arts, transformed the property of a defunct college into an "arts campus." The arts campus—which includes the Sitka Fine Arts Camp, Hames Center for Fitness and Dance, Sheldon Jackson Museum, and Sitka Sound Science Center—has become a cultural tourism destination and an economic engine. The campus also hosts the [Sitka Arts and Science Festival](#). Learn more about the project in the announcements of the [ArtPlace grant](#) and National Endowment for the Arts [Our Town grant](#) that have supported it.
- [Sealaska Heritage Institute](#): The mission of this nonprofit group based in Juneau, Alaska, is to promote and enhance the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian cultures of Southeast Alaska through arts based and other strategies. Several of its programs support the entrepreneurship of artists and artisans living in isolated coastal communities. Every June, it sponsors the [Northwest Coast Art Market](#) in conjunction with a four-day festival celebrating Southeast Alaska Native culture. It also facilitates opportunities for arts entrepreneurship through its monthly [First Friday](#) event and its Sealaska Heritage Store. The state funds this work through the Alaska State Council on the Arts. In 2016, the group received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts "to conduct Native Alaskan woodworking and small business classes designed to provide creative entrepreneurship opportunities for tribal and non-tribal residents" who are transitioning from a period of incarceration. More than 40 people are participating in the project.
- [Kivalina, Alaska](#): In 2015, this coastal village of 400 Alaska Native people began an effort to develop a plan for relocating residents in order to meet their basic needs for clean water, sanitation and sufficient space for

housing. The project is a response to the effects of climate change, which are threatening the destruction of this community located on a barrier island. Community leaders have worked with ethnographic artists and transdisciplinary partners to engage community members in the planning process. ArtPlace has supported the effort; read its [summary](#) of the project to learn more.

- [Art on Main Street in Haines, Alaska](#): The nonprofit Alaska Arts Confluence, which has received grant support from the Alaska State Council on the Arts, led a project to revitalize the main street of Haines, Alaska, a rural community of about 1,400 people. The project commissioned artists who helped transform vacant storefronts into art installations and develop a sculpture garden and walking tour that would attract tourists from the nearby cruise-ship port of Fort Seward. Learn more about the project in the [announcement](#) of a 2014 ArtPlace grant that supported it.

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- ★ [Alaska: North to Opportunity](#) (Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development's Division of Economic Development, 2016)
- ★ [The Arts Economy of Southeast Alaska](#) (Southeast Conference, 2014)
- ★ [Creative Alaska: Creative Capital and Economic Development Opportunities in Alaska](#) (Andrey N. Petrov and Philip A. Cavin Arctic Social and Environmental Systems Laboratory, Department of Geography, University of Northern Iowa, 2012)

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Arizona Commission on the Arts

- [AZ ArtWorker](#): This program—which the Arizona Commission on the Arts offers in four communities, including one rural town—facilitates artist-to-artist professional development, creating opportunities for Arizona artists to learn from national and international artists. Participating artists receive entrepreneurship training through workshops facilitated by the PAVE Program in Arts Entrepreneurship at the Arizona State University Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts. They also have access to a set of digital tools for supporting their creative business. AZ ArtWorker receives additional financial support from the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation.
- [Arizona Art Tank](#): This was an initiative the Arizona Commission on the Arts (ACA) undertook in 2014 and 2015 that harnessed the spirit of crowdsourcing to make strategic investments in arts based entrepreneurial ventures. Through the program—which was funded by a portion of a one-time additional budget allocation of \$1 million ACA received from the state legislature—applicants were invited to pitch (at public and participatory Art Tank events) new ways of providing meaningful arts experiences to their communities. At each of the four regional Art Tank events in 2014 and 2015, the panel evaluating pitches consisted of governor-appointed commissioners and elected officials as well as local artists, arts professionals and business leaders. Panelists looked for innovative and risk-taking proposals and awarded those that stretched beyond conventional, day-to-day practices. The five pitches receiving the highest panel scores won seed funding in the form of a grant of up to \$10,000. Because Art Tanks were designed to be fun, engaging, inspiring and supportive, Art Tank audiences also voted on the proposals, awarding their favorite with \$500. One of the Art Tank events in 2015 was held in a small, rural community. In addition to funding some rural projects, Arizona Art Tank is relevant to rural arts development because it reframes the mechanism through which some state funds are distributed, offering a nontraditional pathway into state support and reducing barriers to entry often experienced by small grass-roots initiatives.
- [AZ Creative Communities Institute](#): This program—a partnership between the Arizona Commission on the Arts and the Arizona State University Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts—offers communities an opportunity to explore the many ways creativity can be leveraged to address local challenges and goals, such as economic development. Over the course of 12 months, participating communities work with a resident artist, send a delegation to four two-day workshops, and receive technical assistance through site visits, mentorship calls and interactive on-line training. Each team receives \$2,500-\$5,000 to support its participation in the learning

sessions and up to \$7,500 to support the coordination, promotion, and overall implementation of program components. Several of the communities that so far have participated in the program are rural.

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- [Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Programs of Arizona State University's Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts](#): The Herberger Institute aims to support arts based enterprise and entrepreneurship in design and the arts. To that end, in 2015 it launched [curricular programs](#) in creative enterprise, arts entrepreneurship and cultural leadership, including a master's degree and an undergraduate certificate. It also ran for 10 years (2007-2017) the [Pave Arts Venture Incubator](#), which provided seed funding, mentorship and technical assistance to students launching an arts based entrepreneurial ventures. Replacing it is a new pilot, [Design/Arts Entrepreneurship In, With, and For Communities](#), which provides up to \$2,500 in seed funding and mentorship to students developing a "creative enterprise to make positive change" in "a specific ethnic community or community of color and whose goal is to make positive change in that community." The school also publishes the [Arizona Arts Entrepreneur Toolkit](#), a comprehensive guide addressing business planning, budgeting, financing, public relations, marketing, legal issues and more.
- [Ajo, Arizona](#): This small community in the middle of the Sonoran Desert—which fell into economic decline when its main employer, a copper mine, closed—is rebounding through a creative economic development effort led by the International Sonoran Desert Alliance, which is a grantee of the Arizona Commission on the Arts. In 2011, the nonprofit received an Our Town creative placemaking grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to build affordable live/work spaces for artists and to develop an artist retreat center. It has subsequently received two more Our Town grants, as well as an [ArtPlace grant](#), which have funded its vision of growing the community into an artist center and cultural tourism destination of international reputation and draw.

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Arkansas Arts Council

- [Collaborative Project Support](#): Through this program, the Arkansas Arts Council awards grants of \$1,000-\$10,000 to support arts activities that serve rural communities and other underserved populations. In order to leverage cross-sector efforts, applications must include a collaboration between two or more community focused organizations. Eligible partners include nonprofits, government agencies, churches, hospitals, public schools and public institutions of higher learning.
- [Artist INC at the Arts Center of the Ozarks](#): The Arts Center of the Ozarks, which serves a number of rural communities surrounding Springdale, Arkansas, offered an eight-week arts-business seminar in 2017. The seminar, [Artist INC](#), is a program of the Mid-America Arts Alliance funded in part by the Arkansas Arts Council. Artists participating in it benefited from multimedia lectures, large-group discussions, small-group activities and mentoring.

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- [CIRD Workshop in Eureka Springs, Arkansas](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2006, CIRD held a workshop in rural Eureka Springs, Arkansas, that was focused on designing an arts and culture district for the community. Through it, community members developed conceptual designs for an arts and cultural district and a process for revitalizing a former ice house as an anchor space for its creative placemaking effort.
- [Delta Creative Placemaking Initiative](#): This is a pilot project of the Delta Regional Authority, a federal entity focused on improving the regional economies of the [252 counties and parishes](#) of the eight-state Mississippi Delta region. It aims to help local governments, economic development groups and other stakeholders leverage

the arts to spark economic development. To that end, it is awarding grants to help small communities strategically integrate the arts into their economic and community development strategies. In October 2017, the initiative awarded grants to two rural communities in Arkansas. Cherokee Village received \$20,000 to construct a business incubator and community space to support the arts, entrepreneurialism and community development. Meanwhile, Marvell received \$20,000 to restore the childhood home of Levon Helm, the drummer and a vocalist for The Band, as a site celebrating the region's musical legacy.

- [Ozark Folk Center State Park](#): This state park, which has received funding from the Arkansas Arts Council, is dedicated to promoting the heritage and way of life of the Ozark Mountains. With a number of workshops—in pioneer crafts, herb gardening and traditional folk music—and a concert program, the state park is a tourist destination. It is located in Mountain View, Arkansas, a community of about 2,800 people.

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- [Unveiling the Creative Economy in Arkansas](#) (Regional Technology Strategies, Inc., 2009)
- ★ [Deep Roots, High Hopes: Foundations of Arkansas' Creative Economy](#) (Regional Technology Strategies, Inc., 2008)
- [Ducks, Documentaries and Design: Tales from Arkansas' Creative Economy](#) (Regional Technology Strategies, Inc., 2008)
- [Creativity in the Natural State: Growing Arkansas' Creative Economy](#) (Regional Technology Strategies, Inc., 2007)

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California Arts Council

- [Creative California Communities Grant](#): This program awards funding to collaborative creative placemaking projects that leverage cultural assets—including artists, cultural organizations and arts related businesses—to address community priorities. Creative economic development is one of the grant's goals.
- [California Cultural Districts](#): Through this program, the California Arts Council (CAC) certifies local cultural districts, which can leverage the designation to spark creative placemaking and related economic development. CAC supports districts after their certification by providing technical assistance and promotional support and by collaborating with other public agencies and private entities to locate financial and opportunities for them. It also provides a stipend of \$10,000 over two years to districts participating in a process to refine the design of the program. Several of California's 14 certified districts are in rural communities. For instance, the [Eureka Cultural Arts District](#) is located in a town of about 27,000 on the edge of California's redwood forests. The [Grass Valley-Nevada City Cultural District](#), located in the heart of gold country, is spread over two small towns, Grass Valley and Nevada City, which have populations of 13,000 and 3,000, respectively. Finally, the [Truckee Cultural District](#) is located in the High Sierra in a town of about 16,000 people.

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- [Art & Ag Project](#): This is a creative placemaking project that fosters connections between artists, farmers and the local community to raise awareness about the importance of preserving farmland and the visual arts in a rural, agricultural part of northern California. The initiative, which is led by a community arts center known as YoloArts—a longtime California Arts Council grantee—enables painters, photographers and other artists to be inspired by and directly create their work on local farms. Each fall, YoloArts organizes an exhibition of the artwork made on the participating farms. In addition, its Artful Plate program commissions original works of art to be printed on dinner plates to be sold at restaurants and community events serving locally sourced meals. Learn more about the Art & Ag Project in the [announcement](#) of a 2011 ArtPlace grant that supported it.
- [Mad River Industrial Art Park](#): Dell'Arte International, a theatre school and company, reactivated the Mad River Industrial Art Park through arts programming in order to "connect art, industry and artisanal cultural work to promote economic development in the rural California community of Blue Lake." For example, Dell'Arte has located its annual Mad River Festival—which features five weeks of "performance, music and pageantry" from

local and international artists—to the Art Park. As part of the effort, the arts organization, which is a California Arts Council grantee, has partnered with the Blue Lake Chamber of Commerce and the local business community. A 2013 ArtPlace grant helped support the project.

- [Cultural District Planning for the Yurok Indian Reservation](#): In 2014, the Yurok Tribe began developing a cultural district within the rural Yurok Indian Reservation. The planning process focused on identifying cultural assets and building an outdoor amphitheater to host arts programming. The National Endowment for the Arts awarded an Our Town grant in support of the project.
- [CIRD Workshop in Lone, California](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2010, CIRD held a workshop in Lone, California—a town of about 7,000 in the Sierra Nevada Mountains—that focused on how to revitalize the community and its surrounding county. The area is home to historic towns and cultural sites as well as ranches, farms and mines.
- [Lake County Arts Council Rural Arts Initiative](#): This is an effort of the Lake County Arts Council, a grantee of the California Arts Council with a mission to be a catalyst for arts and culture as a driving force for local communities. The initiative aims to revitalize the rural county's economy by leveraging the arts to increase cultural tourism. It also is working to develop economic clusters linking arts and culture facilities with local businesses to create unique celebrations, festivals and installations.

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- [Otis Report on the Creative Economy of California](#) (Otis College of Art and Design, 2017)
- ★ [Our Creative Roots, Challenges of Analyzing Rural Regions](#) (Creative Vitality Suite, 2017)

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Colorado Creative Industries

- [Space to Create, Colorado](#): The goal of the program is to stimulate community and economic development in rural and small towns by attracting creative talent with affordable housing and work space. This program—realized through a partnership between Colorado Creative Industries, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, History Colorado, the Boettcher Foundation, the Gates Foundation and the consulting firm Artspace—develops mixed-use buildings that merge affordable live/work space for artists and their families with space for creative enterprises and organizations serving community. Over eight years, the effort will complete nine projects throughout Colorado. In 2016, the vacancy rate of downtown commercial spaces of the first project site, Trinidad, Colorado—which was certified as a Colorado Creative District in 2014—fell from 63% to 28%. In addition, there were 42 commercial real estate transactions totaling \$7.6 million in local investment.
- [Creative Districts](#): Through this program, Colorado Creative Industries (CCI) certifies local creative districts to help them leverage creative placemaking and economic development investments. The program's goals are to (1) create hubs and clusters of economic activity; (2) promote a community's unique identity; and (3) enhance rural communities as appealing places to live, conduct business and attract visitors. Since the program began, CCI has helped develop 21 creative districts in both rural and urban communities around the state. CCI supports districts after their certification through its [Project and Technical Assistance Fund for Certified Creative Districts](#), which awards grants of up to \$10,000 to enable individual districts to develop their unique assets.
- [Colorado Music Strategy](#): This is a \$200,000 public-private partnership between Colorado Creative Industries (CCI) and the Bohemian Foundation that aims to generate opportunities for live music, thereby increasing revenue for musicians and presenting organizations, enriching the state's culture, and raising its profile as a destination for the arts. The program includes an annual music industry conference; seven regional advisory groups addressing local needs; research conducted by the University of Colorado Denver and Colorado State University; and the [Detour](#) pilot program, which since 2015 has facilitated live music performances in small and

rural communities. The Colorado music ambassador, a new honorary post appointed by CCI and the governor, is the face of the program and will advocate for film, television and other licensing opportunities for local musicians. The Bohemian Foundation is managing the day-to-day aspects of the Colorado Music Strategy, including the program's \$50,000 Colorado Music Event Fund and the grants to be awarded from it. The strategy aligns with Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper's (D) focus on leveraging creative industries to strengthen local economies and enhance residents' quality of life.

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- [Gran's University](#): This was a 2012 project of the [M12 collective](#), a collaborative studio of artists and architects based in Colorado, that supported "site-specific cultural practices" in rural Washington County, which has a population of about 5,000 spread over 2,523 square miles. Members of the collective, which is a Colorado Creative Industries grantee, drove around the county to interview more than 150 residents from five towns about what they wanted in their community. Through this engagement, residents were able to share their cultural knowledge and highlight their creative practices. In response, the M12 Collective worked with a Swedish art collective known as Kultivator to create an art installation. The exchanges and the resulting installation helped preserve the rural knowledge and tradition in the county. An Our Town creative placemaking grant from the National Endowment for the Arts helped fund the effort.
- [CIRD Workshop in Limon, Colorado](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2017, CIRD held a workshop in Limon, Colorado—a town of fewer than 2,000 people—to design a trail and wayfinding system to promote the town's unique cultural heritage, attract cultural tourists and support local economic development. Local residents participated in the workshop as did the Colorado Department of Transportation, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Colorado.
- [Crested Butte Cultural District](#): In 2014, Crested Butte, Colorado—a mountain town of about 1,500 people—generated 39% of its sales tax revenue from creative businesses operating in the community. Recognizing the economic value of fostering the arts, the town council created a local cultural district in 2015 and subsequently sought, and received in 2016, official certification of it from Colorado Creative Industries. Since its designation, the district has partnered with the local tourism association to encourage cultural tourism, developed a new wayfinding system, established a brand identity, undertook community engagement activities and developed resources for promoting artists. A major goal of the district is to develop "cultural patronage so that creatives and creative businesses thrive."

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Connecticut Office of the Arts

- [Assets for Artists](#): The Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) has partnered with MASS MoCA, a contemporary art museum in rural western Massachusetts, to bring its Assets for Artists to Connecticut. The program provides financial and business training and other professional development to artist-entrepreneurs who live in Connecticut's rural counties. It also offers them financial support in the form of a matching-savings program. Three regional arts service organizations—Northwest Connecticut Arts Council, Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition, and Windham Arts—are helping to facilitate the program. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is supporting the effort through a Rural Business Development Grant it awarded to COA.
- [Arts Workforce Initiative](#): This program supports career development for emerging professionals by expanding professional opportunities in the creative industries for applicants from diverse and traditionally underrepresented backgrounds. Through the program, the Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) pairs arts organizations with interns specializing in arts administration, curation, media arts, performing arts, visual arts,

arts education and literary arts. (COA selects both the interns and the program's partner organizations based on their alignment with its [READI framework](#), which promotes relevance, equity, access, diversity and inclusion in all of COA's programs.) Interns have been placed at museums, community arts organizations and performing arts centers where they worked alongside seasoned arts professionals to gain hands-on experience. Organizations hosting an intern receive \$3,750 to cover the intern's wages (\$15/hour) for 10 weeks. In 2018, COA is seeking partner organizations from both rural and urban areas of the state.

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- [Northwest Connecticut Arts Council](#): This local arts agency, which receives financial support from the Connecticut Office of the Arts, serves 25 towns in a rural part of the state. The organization works to support arts and cultural activities in the region that have social, educational and economic benefits. To inform its work, the organization has conducted two [cultural assessments](#) through which it inventoried cultural assets, assessed barriers to cultural participation and examined the marketing strategies, business conditions and needs of artists. The group's signature event is the annual [Open Your Eyes Arts Studio Tour](#). The 30-40 artists who participate in the tour benefit from the marketing and entrepreneurship opportunity.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Connecticut](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)

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Delaware Division of the Arts

- [Grant Programs](#): The Delaware Division of the Arts fosters rural economic development through two of its grant programs. [Arts Access Grants](#) award up to \$1,000 in support of the presentation of performing, visual, literary, media or folk arts. [Project Support Grants](#), meanwhile, award \$2,000-\$10,000 to "assist the growth of a vibrant cultural environment by encouraging the continued development of arts activities in communities throughout the state."
- [Delaware Scene](#): This is an on-line events calendar and market development tool that promotes the arts and cultural offerings of the First State. Sponsored by the Delaware Division of the Arts with start-up support from the Delaware Government Information Center, the service promotes cultural tourism and raises the visibility of local artisans, cultural organizations and arts venues. A special tool lets users filter the results to see the cultural resources and assets available in rural southern Delaware. This part of the state is home to agricultural and maritime history, African-American heritage sites, small niche museums, independent galleries and art leagues, and festivals and markets that capitalize on visitor traffic to the area's beaches.

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- [Downtown Milford Inc.](#): This nonprofit organization is a catalyst for the arts based vibrancy of Milford, Delaware, a community with about 11,000 residents. Through its Art on the Riverwalk Tour project, the group has installed 18 permanent public art pieces located around town that are based on the nautical design of a local shipyard. The group also facilitated the creation of a mural celebrating the "different cultures and backgrounds that make Milford such a unique and wonderful place to live." Currently, it is working on a project to recruit local artists to design a set of bike racks the municipal government is installing in the downtown shopping district and along a river walk.
- [Rehoboth Art League](#): This organization is a cultural anchor of Rehoboth, Delaware, a beach community of about 1,500 year-round residents that swells with tourists in the summer months. In addition to offering art classes and hosting exhibitions, the group offers entrepreneurial opportunities to local artists and artisans. Member artists may sell their work in the league's gallery space, during its summer Outdoor Show and at its Annual Holiday Fair. The group receives funding from the Delaware Division of the Arts.

- [Eat. Drink. Buy Art. on Delmarva](#): This a marketing effort of Tourism, Arts, Downtown Development, a network of 18 communities in Maryland and Delaware on the Delmarva Peninsula. It includes a website, a monthly e-mail newsletter, a phone app, and Twitter and Facebook newsfeeds designed to help cultural tourists experience the artists, arts venues, restaurants and related events in participating communities. The project receives financial support from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.
- [Project Pop-Up](#): This is a partnership of the Delaware Economic Development Office and Downtown Delaware—which is an agency of the Delaware Division of Small Business, Development and Tourism—that provides local entrepreneurs with three months of rent-free commercial space during the holiday season so they can open a pop-up shop. The program, which has received financial support from the [U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Community Development Initiative](#), also provides business consulting services in effort to help participating entrepreneurs launch and grow their business. Creative businesses in rural communities, including [Milton](#) and [Milford](#), Delaware, have benefited from it.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Delaware](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)

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Florida Division of Cultural Affairs

- [Cultural Tourism Toolkit](#): The Florida Division of Cultural Affairs designed this toolkit to help arts and cultural organizations in both rural and urban communities foster cultural tourism. It also facilitates connections between the arts and the broader tourism industries.
- [Grants Workshops in Rural Counties](#): The Florida Division of Cultural Affairs works to ensure it funds rural counties by holding grant workshops in communities designated by the state's [Rural Economic Development Initiative \(REDI\)](#), which was legislatively established to coordinate and focus state services in support of rural populations.
- [Rural Economic Development Initiative \(REDI\)](#): The goal of this [legislatively established initiative](#) is to better serve rural communities in the state by coordinating and focusing state and regional agency efforts. The initiative, among other things, works with rural communities to improve their economies; undertakes advocacy, outreach and capacity building efforts; evaluates state statutes and rules and works to mitigate their potential adverse impacts on rural communities; and recommends waivers of provisions of economic development programs on a project-by-project basis. The Florida Division of Cultural Affairs supports REDI efforts as its parent agency, the Florida Department of State, is one of the enumerated REDI agencies.
- [Florida Main Street Program](#): This is a technical assistance program administered by the Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation in support of historic commercial corridors around the state. The Florida Division of Cultural Affairs helps the program leverage local arts and cultural resources in support of rural communities' economic development by coordinating constituent outreach and education efforts.

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- [CIRD Workshop in Live Oak, Florida](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2013, CIRD held a workshop in Live Oak, a small town in rural northern Florida, to envision how to rebuild its downtown district and public spaces, which were devastated by Hurricane Debby in 2010. Local government officials, realtors, entrepreneurs, artists and other residents participated in it. Since then, according to a 2016 report of the redevelopment effort, the community effort has led to the Rails to Trails Project, West Side Retail Area Project,

Live Oak Heritage Trail and Festival Park (which is home to a number of cultural events such as the annual Jazz and Arts Blues Festival), a farmers' market, and more.

- [Arts in Healthcare for Rural Communities Toolkit](#): This toolkit is a resource of the Arts in Healthcare for Rural Communities program at the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine, which began in 2008 with support from the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts. The toolkit is designed to help rural communities develop and implement arts-in-healthcare initiatives, connecting underserved residents with better healthcare and wellness strategies. It includes guidance on conducting needs assessments and community-resource mapping. It also highlights model programs from around Florida.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Florida](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)

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Georgia Council for the Arts

- [Vibrant Communities Grant](#): This program aims to award grants to applicants serving counties that have not received funding from the Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) in a given fiscal year. Most of these counties are rural. Grants of \$1,000-\$5,000 are available to nonprofits, local government entities, public libraries, and schools, colleges and universities to fund capacity building efforts as well as performances, exhibits, workshops, readings, demonstrations, murals, artist residencies and other art programs. The program's application process is streamlined in order to help applicants with varying degrees of grant-writing experience. The grant, which is underwritten by a line-item appropriation from the state legislature, becomes available once GCA issues awards in its other grant programs.
- [Tourism Resource Team](#): The Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) works with the Tourism Product Development team of the Georgia Department of Economic Development's Tourism Division. The Tourism Product Development team, which includes one GCA staff member, visits local communities to offer resources and concrete suggestions for leveraging arts assets to foster cultural tourism and creative economic development. The team has worked mostly in rural counties. It visits communities for three to five days to tour local facilities, interview stakeholders and facilitate community meetings. About three months later, the team returns with recommendations for tourism development, which are also articulated in a [detailed report](#).

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- [Pasaquan](#): Pasaquan, which is one of the most important visionary-art environments in the United States, has been an economic development catalyst in both Buena Vista, Georgia, a town of about 2,200, and the rest of rural Marion County. It was created by a self-taught artist named Eddie Owens Martin. In 2014, the Pasaquan Preservation Society—which had been managing the property and its artworks following the artist's death—partnered with the Kohler Foundation Inc. and Columbus State University to restore the site and open it to the public. Now a program of the university, Pasaquan has become a major cultural tourism attraction that features tours, performances, workshops and retreats.
- [Paradise Garden Foundation](#): This group manages Paradise Garden, the former home and studio of world-famous American folk artist Howard Finster, which has since become a major cultural tourism attraction in rural northwest Georgia. Chattooga County bought the property in 2012 from Finster's family with the help of a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission. It subsequently leased it to the Chattooga County Development Authority, which in turn leased it to the Paradise Garden Foundation, a grantee of the Georgia Council for the Arts. The foundation restored the property, including its studio facilities and outdoor art environment, in effort to create an anchor for "cultural tourism and entrepreneurial economic development." Learn more in the [announcement](#) of a 2013 ArtPlace grant that helped fund the effort.

- [Clarkston Art at the Center Incubator](#): In 2014, the Clarkston Community Center Foundation received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to fund artist spaces and a creative entrepreneurship program. The Clarkston Art at the Center Incubator provides free studio space to artists so they can develop their practice. It also works with the Clarkston Business Accelerator to offer business training, low-interest loans and stipends to support artist-entrepreneurs. The nonprofit group Alternate ROOTS provides networking and mentorship support to participating artists. The Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) has funded Alternate ROOTS and numerous other cultural and civic organizations in Clarkston, which is a town with about 7,500 residents, including many foreign-born refugees. GCA's support has fostered a creative habitat that has been conducive to creative projects like the incubator.
- [ART Station](#): This nonprofit arts group revitalized downtown Stone Mountain, Georgia—a community of about 12,000 residents—by transforming empty storefronts into art galleries and artists' work spaces. The project had tangible economic effects. Three new restaurants cited the community's revitalization as the motivation for their opening. In addition, two art galleries and a frame shop have moved in. The National Endowment for the Arts supported the effort through an [Our Town](#) grant. ART Station has received support from the Georgia Council for the Arts.
- [Statesboro, Georgia](#): Located in rural Bulloch County, this community has experienced economic growth after its municipal government worked with the [Averitt Center for the Arts](#) and Georgia Southern University to leverage the arts to revitalize its downtown corridor. The Averitt Center for the Arts, a Georgia Council for the Arts grantee, now operates out of five buildings and partners with the local school system to run an after-school program.
- [Swamp Gravy](#): Swamp Gravy is the "Official Folk Life Play of Georgia," which is performed annually from July to October in Colquitt, a town of about 1,900 in rural Miller County. Since the event began in 1992, it has become major cultural tourism attraction and a local economic driver. The performance is a project of the Colquitt/Miller Arts Council, a Georgia Council for the Arts grantee, which fuels the region's cultural vibrancy through a number of other arts events.
- [CIRD Workshop in Thomasville, Georgia](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2016, CIRD held a workshop in Thomasville, a rural community near the Florida Panhandle, to consider how creative placemaking could rejuvenate a historically and culturally important park. The workshop developed a design vision as well as the capacity of civic leaders to facilitate future efforts to engage citizens to improve and leverage the value of community and cultural assets.

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- [Georgia's Creative Economy](#) (Georgia Council for the Arts, 2017)
- ★ [Leveraging Public Investment in the Arts: The Role of Arts-based Economic Development Strategies in Georgia Communities](#) (Georgia Council for the Arts and Georgia Municipal Association, 2015)

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Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts

- [Apprentice Mentoring Grants](#): This apprenticeship program is designed to support the transmission of skills from master artists and craftsman to future generations of practitioners. Through it, the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts awards funding to teams consisting of an individual with mastery of a traditional cultural practice and one to three practitioner apprentices. Grantee teams must complete 80 hours of learning activities in the form of one-on-one classes, group classes, cultural excursions, or activities such as presentations, performances, demonstrations and lectures that build skill, knowledge and confidence.

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- [Creative Lab Hawai'i](#): This is a program of the Creative Industries Division of the Hawai'i State Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism that supports the state's economy by working to increase exports, attract investment and build capacity for creative entrepreneurship. The program—which is an example of how a state can take an innovative approach to investing in its citizens as cultural entrepreneurs—has three components. [Immersive Programs](#) are year-long practicums designed to help advance careers in six creative industries: broadband/new media; television and film production; screenwriting; mobile game application design; animation; music; and design/fashion. The curriculum of each track is different, but most include coaching, mentorships, a five-day intensive workshop and industry exposure, such as attending a trade show. [Ideation Workshops](#) are two-day events designed to help creative entrepreneurs in early-stage project development to prepare to participate in the Immersive Program. [Public Keynotes](#) are free panel discussions and workshops featuring professionals working in the six creative industries of the Immersive Programs. Industry partners include the Writers Guild of America, Producers Guild of America, Hawaii Academy of Recording Arts, The Hawai'i International Film Festival and Screen Actors Guild/AFTRA. Creative Lab Hawai'i receives funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration and U.S. Department of Commerce.
- [Heart of Kohala](#): This is a creative placemaking project sponsored by One Island Sustainable Living—a program of a nonprofit organization that promotes rural education and economic development—"that aims to identify existing and potential arts assets in a remote, rural district on the Island of Hawai'i." Through the two-year project, which in 2017 received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, local artists and writers are helping to convene a series of small discussion groups, public forums and design sessions to guide community members "through an arts identification, future arts infrastructure mapping, and place making design process to enhance the livability of North Kohala." The project is to yield the community's first arts plan, an art-infrastructure map and a design model for a "multi-cultural public 'Art Park'" as well as "'Arts Walkways'" where permanent and temporary visual and performance arts touch the heart of Kohala."
- [Lāna'i Culture & Heritage Center](#): This institution collects, preserves and displays "artifacts of traditional, cultural, historical and artistic value to the people and island of Lāna'i—representative of Lāna'i's Hawai'ian culture, ranching era, diverse populations who built the pineapple plantation and community on the island, and natural history." It is a cultural tourism draw for Lāna'i, a rural community of about 3,100. The center has received financial support from the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.
- [Seeds of Hope](#): In 2012, the Hawai'i Rural Development Council—a nonprofit organization committed to promoting and supporting rural based economic welfare in Hawai'i—supported an effort that leveraged the storytelling potential of film to raise awareness about issues relating to agriculture, food and rural land use in the state. The group organized 31 film forums to catalyze community conversations and policy dialogues related to *Seeds of Hope*, a documentary about Hawai'i's struggle to resolve conflicting demands on its limited agricultural resources. The film featured the voices of innovative farmers, food distributors, ranchers, educators and everyday citizens.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Hawai'i](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)
- [Hawaii's Creative Economy Report](#) (Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, 2016)

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Idaho Commission on the Arts

- [My Artrepreneur™ Program](#): Through this program—which the Idaho Commission the Arts (ICA) adapted from the Montana Artrepreneur Program—working artists teach business-development skills to other artists. Over seven months, participating artists attend four two-day workshops where they receive more than 40 hours of college level instruction and 35 practical business tools. Through a dollar-to-dollar matching commitment, ICA

cuts the program's tuition in half, from \$1,000 to \$500, for participating artists. Artists are, however, responsible for their own lodging and transportation.

- [Idaho Rural Partnership](#): The Idaho Commission on the Arts occasionally advises the Idaho Rural Partnership—a group created by the state legislature that leverages public and private resources to improve the economic conditions of and quality of life in rural Idaho—on how the arts can help strengthen rural communities.

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- [Driggs, Idaho](#): This town of about 1,600 residents in the rural Teton Valley transformed more than 13,000 square feet of public space in its downtown corridor into a vibrant arts, visitor, recreation and transit center. The city, which has received funding from the Idaho Commission on the Arts, also created a complementary public art plan to be integrated into its larger development agenda and implemented a local tax district to fund its creative placemaking activities, which aim to generate tourism revenue. Each year, about 500,000 people heading to Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park or Jackson Hole, Wyoming, pass through the town on the Teton Scenic Byway. The genesis of this endeavor was a 2004 Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) workshop. It received funding from an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the arts as well as the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transportation Authority and Driggs Urban Renewal Agency.
- [Universities and Regional Creative Clusters in the Intermountain West](#): Two Boise State University professors are conducting research on how universities in rural regions can support the careers of working artists and foster arts based economic development. The project, which in 2015 received an Art Works: Research grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, is considering how universities in the western United States can become creative economic development anchors. The research includes interviews with university administrators in Colorado, Nevada and Idaho.

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Illinois Arts Council Agency

- [Summer Youth Employment in the Arts Program](#): Through this program, the Illinois Arts Council Agency (IACA) symbiotically realizes its goals to increase and enrich arts education opportunities, to support cultural organizations, and to demonstrate how the arts benefit communities and local economies. IACA awards grants of up to \$6,000 to eligible nonprofit arts organizations to underwrite paid internships for high school students and recent graduates who have not yet begun college. IACA supports up to four internships per grantee organization and up to 20 hours a week per student intern, awarding a maximum of \$3,000 per intern. Interns' jobs may be administrative or artistic in nature, as long as they offer the chance for positive cultural experiences and provide on-the-job training in the arts. The program aims to help students grow personally and professionally through engagement with the arts and arts administration while it supports the work of nonprofits, grows IACA's community connections and fosters a greater understanding of the value of the arts in public life.
- [Community Arts Access](#): This program is one of the main ways the Illinois Arts Council Agency (IACA) fosters arts programming and creative economic development in local communities. Through the grant, IACA provides funding to local arts agencies that support their services for and funding of local constituents.

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- [Rural Partners](#): This is a member-driven nonprofit organization that supports rural Illinois by connecting individuals, businesses, organizations and communities with public and private resources. It focuses on improving quality of life by fostering community and economic development through facilitating technical assistance, networking and convenings. The group—which is one of 39 State Rural Development Councils associated with the National Rural Development Partnership of the U.S. Department of Agriculture—conducts its work through relationships it has with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Illinois, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Illinois

Institute for Rural Affairs, and other nonprofits and private-sector businesses. Rural Partners supports the realization of arts and culture goals through its [Community Development Resource Program](#). It helped the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs update the [Rural Development Resource Guide](#), which highlights the resources available from the Illinois Arts Council Agency. The organization also served on the Governor's Taskforce on the Creative Economy.

- [Illinois Made](#): This is an initiative of the Illinois Office of Tourism that celebrates the "makers, creators, and artisans who help craft Illinois by hand, inspiring visitors and fellow Illinoisans to discover more about the state by experiencing firsthand the passion that makes it thrive." The state's [criteria](#) for the Illinois Made designation includes artisans working in studios and storefronts versus large-scale operations and those who work with a specific Illinois resource. The project features a [visitor itinerary](#) built around unique artisanal products produced in Illinois. Many of the itinerary's sites are located in smaller communities beyond the Chicago region. Related to Illinois Made is the on-line, interactive database of arts and cultural venues and events maintained by the Illinois Office of Tourism. This resource enables users to explore the lesser-known areas of the state.
- [Millikin University](#): This small, private university in Decatur, Illinois—the seat of rural Macon County—offers an [Arts and Entrepreneurship Program](#). The six-credit course sequence for undergraduate students leverages learning based business opportunities. The curriculum incorporates experiential activities and student-run business ventures. Participating students practice their arts entrepreneurship through the [Blue Connection Gallery](#), the school's student-run, retail art gallery located in downtown Decatur. Millikin University is a longtime grantee of the Illinois Arts Council Agency.
- [Museum on Main Street](#): This program is a partnership between Illinois Humanities and the Smithsonian Institution that brings traveling exhibitions to small communities throughout Illinois. Its goals are to enable rural residents to experience world-class exhibitions in their own community and to help the local cultural organizations hosting them develop their audience base as well as their institutional capacity. In 2018 and 2019, the program will send Crossroads: Change in Rural America—a show exploring the relationship of land use to local economies as well as how various cultural communities regard land management—to six communities with fewer than 10,000 residents each.
- [Delta Creative Placemaking Initiative](#): This is a pilot project of the Delta Regional Authority, a federal entity focused on improving the regional economies of the [252 counties and parishes](#) of the eight-state Mississippi Delta region. It aims to help local governments, economic development groups and other stakeholders leverage the arts to spark economic development. To that end, it is awarding grants to help small communities strategically integrate the arts into their economic and community development strategies. In October 2017, the initiative awarded grants to two small Illinois communities. Metropolis, Illinois, received \$22,000 to revitalize the Massac Theatre as a multiuse facility that preserves its historical and cultural significance to the community. Equality, Illinois, received \$20,000 to rehabilitate a vacant building to establish a regional cultural arts center that promotes tourism and business development opportunities for entrepreneurs, small business owners and local artists.

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- [The Creative Economy in Illinois](#) (Arts Alliance Illinois, 2014)

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Indiana Arts Commission

- [The State Arts Agency's Rural Situation Assessment](#): While conducting its latest strategic plan, the Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) assessed demographic trends affecting the state. It took note of projections indicating that there will be a dramatic migration within Indiana's work force. For example, 69 of the state's 92 counties are to experience a shrinking population of people between ages 25 and 64. The work force of Indianapolis is to grow by 17% while the state's rural work force is to decrease by the same amount. This trend is driven by young people who are leaving rural communities for college or trade school and then moving to metropolitan

Indianapolis or an urban area in another state. In response, IAC is joining many other state agencies in focusing its efforts to make "rural areas attractive to residents, businesses and decision makers" in effort to "sustain and increase employment, businesses and services in small-town Indiana with arts and culture as a backdrop and vital ingredient." The programs profiled below are examples of how that emphasis is manifesting in agency policies and programs.

- [Stellar Communities Program](#): This is an interagency program supporting small and/or rural communities realizing comprehensive community and economic development projects. For the past three years, the Indiana Arts Commission has served as a consultant to the [Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs](#) on the effort. This partnership enables IAC to work directly with communities and provide input on the value and importance of incorporating arts into their economic development planning. Every community that has participated in the Stellar Communities program has increased its arts focus. IAC is considering whether to expand its role in this program by offering consulting or technical assistance services to community participants.
- [Creative Placemaking Technical Assistance](#): In June 2017, the Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) hosted [From the Ground Up](#), a creative placemaking workshop for small and/or rural communities. Participating communities are eligible to apply for IAC's [Open Scene Consultancy](#), which provides 50 hours of consulting in support of developing a community-specific creative placemaking strategy. Eight rural communities have received this consulting support (Batesville, Greenfield, Logansport, Nashville, Plymouth, Rising Sun, Rockville and Rushville). Complementing both the workshop and the consulting support is IAC's [Creative Placemaking Toolkit](#). This on-line resource features practical information and project inspiration for artists, community leaders and other stakeholders. It includes a number of resources organized around partnership building, effective communication and fundraising. The section on funding identifies federal, state and foundation grant programs and describes other financing options such as community development financial institutions. The toolkit also includes a primer on creative placemaking ideas, goals and approaches as well as case studies of artist- and community-led projects and links to white papers and training opportunities available elsewhere.
- [Statewide Cultural District Program](#): Through this program, the Indiana Arts Commission certifies cultural districts, a designation communities can leverage to develop their creative economy. Several of the seven certified districts in Indiana—the [Columbus Arts District](#), [Madison Arts and Cultural District](#) and [Nashville Arts and Entertainment District](#)—are located in a rural community. The Commission allows certified districts to apply for a project grant of up to \$5,000 to support their creative placemaking and/or economic development goals.

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- [Wayne County Cultural Atlas](#): The City of Richmond, Indiana, is undertaking a cultural-asset mapping initiative. Initially, the municipality and its project partners—including the Richmond Art Museum, Indiana University East, Earlham College, Wayne County Convention and Tourism Bureau, and Big Car, a creative placemaking group—aimed "to identify, map, and develop a wayfinding plan for a cultural trail in Wayne County." Now they are developing multiple maps and trails to be combined in a cultural atlas. When the atlas is complete and available on-line and through an app, it will be a tool for cultural tourism and creative economic development in this rural part of Indiana. In 2014, the National Endowment for the Arts awarded an Our Town grant in support of the effort.
- [Tippecanoe Arts Federation](#): Based in Lafayette, Indiana, this local arts agency—which receives partnership support from the Indiana Arts Commission—provides technical assistance, grant-making and other services to many rural communities from 14 counties in northern Indiana. It also has arts programming that fosters the vibrancy and economy of its local community, such as exhibitions, gallery walks, a mural initiative, an instrument lending library and an after-school arts program.
- [Rural Routes to Maine Street Cultural Trail](#): This self-directed driving tour of more than 40 artisan destinations in three rural counties just west of Indianapolis is a generator of cultural tourism in the region. It was developed through a partnership between Visit Hendricks County, Visit Morgan County and the Putnam County Visitor Bureau.

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Iowa Arts Council

- [Celebration of Iowa: Agriculture Art Award](#): This is a juried competition of artwork that promotes the natural beauty of Iowa and its role as a global leader in agriculture. It is a collaborative effort between the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. The competition's awards, sponsored by the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, include cash prizes for young people and adults. The Iowa Arts Council coordinates the adjudication process. Contest winners are honored at the Iowa State Fair, an annual event that attracts more than a million people from all over the globe and salutes the state's best in agriculture, industry, entertainment and achievement.
- [Arts Build Communities](#): This program helps communities respond to a social need or civic issue through an arts based solution. It awards \$10,000 grants to municipal governments, nonprofit organizations and schools to realize and document a community art project. Participating communities design these projects with technical assistance support they receive from one of three partnering state universities—Iowa State University, the University of Iowa or the University of Northern Iowa. The program has previously supported projects that addressed rural topics such as food insecurity and the loss of family farms.
- [Iowa Great Places](#): This is a placemaking initiative the Iowa Arts Council administers on behalf of its parent agency, the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs. The program aims "to cultivate the unique and authentic qualities of Iowa neighborhoods, districts, communities and regions in order to make them great places to live and work." It provides professional development training and other technical assistance opportunities to these ends. The program also recognizes—through a special designation—communities that have conducted a local planning process and "demonstrated a vision that values their assets while challenging themselves to set realistic goals for advancing their quality of life." Some rural communities have earned the Great Places designation. Designated communities are expected to become active members of the Iowa Great Places Network, which is a forum for peer support and the sharing of best practices. They also are eligible to apply for grant funding (average award of \$185,000) to support an infrastructure project.
- [Iowa Rural Networking Working Group of the Next Generation Initiative](#): The Next Generation Initiative—a collaboration between the Art of the Rural and the Rural Policy Research Institute focused on supporting the arts and creative placemaking in rural America—has an Iowa Rural Networking Working Group. The working group facilitates rural-urban dialogues, coordinates a network of rural practitioners and fosters "appreciation for the value of rural arts and culture in urban Iowa." The network is [cochaired](#) by the Iowa Arts Council and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Iowa.

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- [Next Generation Initiative](#): This is a collaboration between the Art of the Rural and the Rural Policy Research Institute—with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and University of Iowa—focused on supporting the arts and creative placemaking in rural America. Based in Iowa City, the initiative operates through three interlinked activities. It has [Regional Networks](#) in Iowa, Kentucky and Minnesota that endeavor to strengthen connections between the arts, public policy, and community and economic development. Each network has a Regional Network Working Group, organizes regional convenings and undertakes a project in collaboration with Next Generation leadership. It also has a Digital Learning Commons featuring [Digital Exchange](#) webinars, the [Field Blog](#), the [Network Library](#), a time line of the evolution of rural creative placemaking, and [Framing Sources](#) such as essays and articles pertinent to the initiative. In 2016 the initiative held the inaugural [National Rural Creative Placemaking Summit](#) in Iowa City. The event focused on enhancing cross-sector

collaboration, elevating intercultural perspectives within the field and encouraging policy consideration of rural creative placemaking.

- [Des Moines Social Club](#): This is a nonprofit arts and entertainment venue located in a renovated, historic Art Deco firehouse in downtown Des Moines. It is a gathering spot for local artists and arts enthusiasts that offers programming across all arts disciplines. It has a black box theatre, other performance spaces, a gallery, a recording studio, a test kitchen and more. Since opening, the club, which has received funding from the Iowa Arts Council, has been a catalyst for both community engagement and economic development.
- [Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway](#): This is a project of Prairie Rivers of Iowa, a group based in Belle Plaine, to restore and repurpose historic gas stations "through artist interpretation and oral histories" along the Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway, which is the state's longest and most historic byway. It was a finalist for a 2017 Art Place grant.
- [ImaginArt in the Alleys](#): The City of Marion, Iowa—an Iowa Arts Council grantee—received a creative placemaking grant from ArtPlace in 2014 to help businesses stay open during the disruptive construction of a major streetscape project. The project transformed alleyways leading to businesses' backdoors into "welcoming walkways" by installing public art and staging arts programming.
- [LeClaire, Iowa](#): This rural community of fewer than 4,000 residents revitalized its downtown through a master planning process that incorporated principles of placemaking, such as a focus on streetscaping and the community's cultural heritage.

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Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission

- [Tallgrass Artist Residency](#): A partnership between the Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission (KCAIC), the Center for Living Education at Matfield Green and the Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art at Kansas State University, this residency enables artists to live and work for two weeks between April and September in the Flint Hills region of Kansas, where they are surrounded by one of the last remaining tallgrass prairies in North America. The program seeks artists who spark "connection and conversation across the Great Plains," and it is open to those from various backgrounds and career stages without limitation to their creative media and practice. Artists are selected by KCAIC and its local hosting partners—Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, The Bank Art Space, The Volland Store, and Prairieside Cottage & Outpost (which also furnishes the residency's living quarters). Residents participate in a symposium at Kansas State University and have the opportunity to show their work at the program's headquarters and in other spaces. The program has been a source of cultural revitalization in the region.
- [Strategic Investment Program](#): This program awards grants of \$5,000 to projects in both rural and urban communities that leverage the arts to enhance community vitality, revitalize neighborhoods, generate local business, create job opportunities and encourage cultural tourism. The grant's [Organizational Development category](#) supports work-force development, efforts that strengthen business and administrative skills, and the creation of marketing materials and strategies that expand audiences to include underserved populations.
- [Arts Integration Program](#): This program supports the roles the arts play in education, community service and work-force development. Its [Innovative Partnerships category](#) awards grants of \$15,000 to projects in rural or urban communities that address economic development and/or community development, among other things.
- [In-Kind Grant Matching for Rural Communities](#): To encourage more rural communities to apply for funding, the Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission (KCAIC) allows communities of 15,000 people or fewer receiving a KCAIC grant to meet all of their matching requirement through in-kind services.
- [Creative Placemaking](#): In November 2017, the Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission (KCAIC) held a creative placemaking roundtable. About 30 stakeholders from across Kansas, including representatives from rural economic development organizations, participated in discussions facilitated by Jonathan Katz, former executive director of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, and in roundtables led by leaders from Kohler Arts Center, Springboard for the Arts, the Wormfarm Institute, Colorado Creative Industries and the

National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures (many rural communities in southwest Kansas have a large Latino population). Since the convening, KCAIC has been developing its programming to increase creative placemaking projects in rural areas.

- **Former Creative Economic Development Programs:** The Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission previously offered two grant programs that encouraged creativity as an industry and an economic development tool. The [Kansas Creative Arts Industries Incentives](#) program offered financial support to creative professionals, businesses and organizations. Incentives—which included wage assistance grants, capital support, and training and education funds—were designed to foster a creative work force as well as facilities and technology expansion. The goal of the program was to encourage creative industries to locate and grow in the state. Funds were available to for-profits as well as nonprofits. The [Creative Economy Project Support](#) program, meanwhile, provided funding to communities and organizations working to leverage creative endeavors to facilitate economic development, to strengthen quality of life, to revitalize communities and to attract cultural tourists. Grants were available only to projects built on partnerships between the public, private and cultural sectors.

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- **[Astra Arts Festival](#):** This is a biennial summer music festival that takes place in Independence, Kansas, a rural town of 9,200 residents. The William Inge Center for the Arts at Independence Community College, a Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission grantee, created the event in 2014 in partnership with the City of Independence. Since then, the festival—which features music, literature, theatre and visual arts—has become an economic driver of the local community. Learn more in this [description of the project](#) by the National Endowment for the Arts, which supported it through an Our Town creative placemaking grant.
- **[CIRD Workshop in Ottawa, Kansas](#):** The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2004, CIRD held a workshop in the small town of Ottawa, Kansas, to focus on revitalizing its downtown through heritage tourism.
- **[Walnut Valley Festival](#):** This acoustic music festival, which is mostly but not exclusively focused on bluegrass, takes place every year in Winfield, Kansas, a town of about 12,000. It began in 1977. Now it takes place over five days every September, drawing roughly 15,000 and benefiting the local economy.
- **[Arts AMAize](#):** This is a creative placemaking project designed to animate community spaces through the arts. Its goal is to activate the downtown corridor of Maize, Kansas, which is a rural town with about 3,400 residents. The effort is sponsored by the Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the City of Maize, Chamber Music at The Barn, and a number of local businesses and community institutions. The National Endowment for the Arts supported it with an [Our Town grant](#) in 2014.

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Kentucky Arts Council

- **[Kentucky Crafted](#):** Kentucky Crafted provides marketing assistance, business training and promotional opportunities to visual and craft artists who have been adjudicated into the program. Participating artists, many of whom live and work in rural communities, are allowed to exhibit their work at events associated with the program, including the [Kentucky Crafted Market](#), an annual three-day event where each year more than 200 artists, musicians and artisanal food producers promote their work to wholesale buyers and the general public. Kentucky Crafted also is a brand that participating artists can leverage to market their work. For example, there are a number of certified Kentucky Crafted retailers throughout the state where participating artists can sell their work.
- **[Homegrown Homemade](#):** Through this initiative, the Kentucky Arts Council (KAC) leverages the social and physical infrastructure of farmers markets to help develop rural arts entrepreneurship. Underwritten by a \$51,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development Agency, the program

connects participating artists with established produce vendors at two farmers markets located in rural counties. The vendors advise the artists on signage, product presentation, brand development and small business logistics. The USDA Rural Development funding also enables KAC to offer technical assistance, such as trainings on artwork pricing and marketing, to spur local creative economies. In addition, KAC is assessing the cultural assets available in the target counties to better understand their creative potential. KAC's findings will inform its continued support of rural artists and their entrepreneurial goals.

- [Kentucky Creative Districts](#): Through this program, the Kentucky Arts Council (KAC) certifies creative districts in order to promote the arts as a catalyst for developing and sustaining vibrant communities and creative economies. The goals of the program include fostering arts based community development; supporting artists, arts entrepreneurs and creative enterprises; strengthening creative-sector entrepreneurship and job development; and supporting the connections among the arts, historic preservation, agriculture, tourism and education. Certified districts leverage their designation to encourage local creative placemaking efforts and related economic growth. Five of KAC's six certified districts are located in rural communities, including [Bardstown](#), [Berea](#) and [Paducah](#).
- [Kentucky Quilt Trails](#): The Kentucky Arts Council's website links to a number of quilt trails in rural communities around the state. These trails, developed by communities via their local arts agency or county extension office, feature large painted wooden quilt squares that are hung on the sides of barns, craft shops, restaurants and other businesses. Communities paint and hang these quilt squares to encourage cultural tourism.

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- [Kentucky Artisan Center](#): The Kentucky Artisan Center, which opened in 2003 and has received Kentucky Arts Council funding since then, is a state facility with 26,000 square feet of gallery, retail and cafe space dedicated to showcasing Kentucky's arts and crafts. It is located in Berea, Kentucky, a town of 13,000 residents that has become known as the state's "folk arts & crafts capital." Building off the center's success, the City of Berea used an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to encourage creative economic development by designing and implementing a [wayfinding system](#) to direct residents and cultural tourists to the community's many cultural assets. Another related effort is the Kentucky Artisan Heritage Trails, which is a cultural tourism project of Eastern Kentucky University's Center for Economic Development, Entrepreneurship and Technology. It was established with funding made available from the Appalachian Regional Commission.
- [Kentucky School of Craft](#): The Kentucky School of Craft is part of the Hazard Community and Technical College, which has received funding from the Kentucky Arts Council. The school was created with seed funding the Kentucky General Assembly appropriated in 1998 in an effort to link economic development and traditional Appalachian artistry. The school's curriculum focuses not only on craft technique but also on helping students become arts entrepreneurs.
- [Appalachian Artisan Center](#): The mission of the Appalachian Artisan Center, which is located in Hindman, Kentucky, "is to develop the economy of eastern Kentucky through our arts, culture, and heritage." It aims to help artists "create and grow successful businesses" by providing various forms of assistance, such as "business plan development, training and continuing education opportunities, studio space, and a venue to sell and exhibit their work." The center is a Kentucky Arts Council grantee. Learn more about its work in an [announcement](#) of a 2017 ArtPlace grant that supports it.
- [Paducah Artist Relocation Program](#): The municipal government of Paducah, Kentucky—a city of about 25,000 in a rural area of the state—revitalized its downtown by selling abandoned properties to artists for next to nothing and provided a subsidy of \$2,500 per artist to help cover renovation costs (e.g., professional fees and architectural services). The program, which began in 2000, has become a national model for arts based economic development. By 2010, the city had achieved a 10-to-1 on its investment in the program. (See p. 4 of PDF: [Creative Placemaking: How to Do It Well](#).)
- [Appalshop](#): Since 1969, this group has supported cultural organizations as well as arts, education and place-based media projects to "celebrate the culture" and "voice the concerns" of people living in Appalachia and other parts of rural America. With support from the Kentucky Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities and a number of foundations, Appalshop—which is located in

Whitesburg, Kentucky, a town of about 2,000 people—has a number of programs and projects that collectively contribute, through staff salaries and other investments, more than \$1.5 million into the local economy each year. Examples include the [Kentucky Rural-Urban Exchange](#), which is a statewide network of artists, farmers, politicians and business owners working together to build mutually beneficial cross-sector partnerships. A joint effort of Appalshop and [Art of the Rural](#), the exchange leverages collaborations between the arts, agriculture, community health and small business in an effort to build collective capacity and support community leaders. It has assembled 130 members from 24 counties, and each year it hosts three weekend-long exchanges "to create a focused network and integrate partnership in key sectors that will address our shared social and economic future." Another example is [Mining the Meaning](#), which is revitalizing the local economy of Letcher County, Kentucky—a federally designated [Promise Zone](#)—through the arts. A 2015 ArtPlace grant supported the project's effort to make the county a cultural hub attractive to both cultural tourists and artist-entrepreneurs. [June Appal Recordings](#) is Appalshop's record label through which it produces and distributes recordings of the music and voices of Appalachia. It has released more than 80 albums. [Performing Our Future](#) was a two-year program (2015-2017) to help rural communities learn how their cultural assets can enable them "to imagine, construct, and own their civic and economic future." Its curriculum was led by the program's partners, including Appalshop, Roadside Theatre, Lafayette College's Economic Empowerment and Global Learning Project and a national consortium of 100 higher education institutions.

- [Sprocket](#): This nonprofit maker space in rural Paducah, Kentucky, aims to be "a place to create and develop innovative programs for education, entrepreneurship, and community learning." Through memberships, agreements with partnering agencies and educational partnerships, it is open to K-12 students, lifelong learners, entrepreneurs, artists, tinkerers and people exploring a career change. The facility offers workshops and features cutting-edge fabrication and digital tools. Currently, Sprocket is operating out of a former factory, but eventually will be located within a local school. It is building its future home in the school with the financial support of a grant from the state's [Kentucky Work Ready Skills Initiative](#). Learn more about the effort [here](#).
- [Kentucky Regional Network Working Group of the Next Generation Initiative](#): The Next Generation Initiative—a collaboration between the Art of the Rural and the Rural Policy Research Institute focused on supporting the arts and creative placemaking in rural America—has a Kentucky Rural Networking Working Group. The Kentucky Arts Council [cochairs](#) the group, which supports the work of the Kentucky Rural-Urban Exchange and creates opportunities for cross-sector and intergenerational collaboration.
- [Center for Rural Strategies](#): This nonprofit group, based both in Whitesburg, Kentucky, and Knoxville, Tennessee, works to improve the economic and social conditions of rural communities "through the creative and innovative use of media and communications." Its activities include "building coalitions, developing partnerships, leading public information campaigns, and advancing strategies that strengthen connections between rural and urban places." It publishes [The Daily Yonder](#), a digital news platform that often highlights examples of rural creative economic development projects. It also manages the [National Rural Assembly](#), a coalition of more than 400 organizations and individuals from 47 states working to support opportunities and improve policies for rural communities in America. The coalition has a [Rural Arts & Culture Working Group](#) that has, through convenings and on-line interactions, addressed creative economic development among other topics pertinent to rural communities.
- [CIRD Workshop in Eastern Kentucky](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2013, CIRD held a workshop in Appalachian Eastern Kentucky to address the integration of arts and culture into community plans and the potential of artists and artisans to contribute to local economies. In 2014, the Kentucky Arts Council, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, hosted two follow-up workshops to provide arts related tools, resources and ideas that help spark economic growth. In particular, one workshop focused on artist-entrepreneurs interested in developing their creative business.
- [Delta Creative Placemaking Initiative](#): This is a pilot project of the Delta Regional Authority, a federal entity focused on improving the regional economies of the [252 counties and parishes](#) of the eight-state Mississippi

Delta region. It aims to help local governments, economic development groups and other stakeholders leverage the arts to spark economic development. To that end, it is awarding grants to help small communities strategically integrate the arts into their economic and community development strategies. In October 2017, the initiative awarded grants to two Kentucky communities. Paducah, Kentucky, received \$20,000 to renovate the unoccupied Arcade Theatre building in its historic downtown so it could become the scene shop for the community's Market House Theatre. Henderson, Kentucky, received \$15,000 to engage four counties in an effort to map cultural entrepreneurship assets and identify opportunities to stimulate community development and generate population growth.

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★ [Kentucky Creative Industry Report](#) (Kentucky Arts Council, 2014)

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Louisiana Division of the Arts

- [Louisiana Cultural Districts](#): Through this program, the Louisiana Division of the Arts certifies cultural districts and provides incentives to them to help foster markets for cultural products, artist production and community identity. Original artwork sold within certified districts is exempt from state and local sales tax. Furthermore, there is a state tax credit (25% for commercial and 18.5% for residential buildings) for the rehabilitation of historic buildings within the districts. Currently, there are 89 certified districts, some of which are in rural communities, including the [Madisonville Cultural District](#), [Old Mandeville Cultural District](#), the [Fontainebleau Cultural District](#) and the [Brandon Cultural District](#).
- [Sound Places](#): The goal of this creative placemaking pilot program, which began in 2017, is to harness the power of music to enhance the vibrancy of Louisiana's cultural districts. Funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, the program is partnership between the Louisiana Division of the Arts, Chamber Music America and Project for Public Spaces. It supports the residencies of small music ensembles in participating communities, which work with cultural district leaders and other community stakeholders to design and realize music-infused placemaking projects addressing local goals. Project for Public Spaces is facilitating the placemaking workshops and also offers technical assistance. Grant funding helps cover associated costs. One of the two pilot sites, the Opelousas Cultural District, is in a rural community.
- [Louisiana Culture Awards](#): This program recognizes efforts that contribute to preserving or enhancing the state's culture. One award category is the Main Street Award, which honors communities that exemplify the strategic use of creativity, historic preservation and/or culture to build a climate for cultural expression, improve quality of life, enhance existing assets and strengthen economic opportunity.
- [Creative Communities Initiative](#): This is a former pilot program of the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, which is the parent agency of the Louisiana Division of the Arts. By enabling leaders from 10 communities to work with coaches trained by The National Consortium for Creative Placemaking, the program helped communities realize placemaking goals related to supporting artists, arts entrepreneurs and the creative economy. The participating leaders—including elected officials and arts professionals—hailed from communities large and small, including parishes, cultural districts and Main Street programs. Coaches met with the local leaders every few weeks. Ultimately, each community team produced a cost-effective and sustainable strategic plan and received a \$3,000 seed grant to implement it.

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- [NUNU Collective](#): This nonprofit group based in Arnaudville, Louisiana—a town with about 1,000 residents—"works to encourage the development of artistic talents, skills, knowledge and business savvy by connecting artists with other artists, businesses, organizations and programs." The organization is the outgrowth of a local artist's vision of creating an arts market that would double as a personal studio and a residence for artists displaced by Hurricane Katrina. The creative space soon became a community nexus organized around weekly

potluck dinners, and it now "serves as a stage/platform/gallery for creative living by facilitating community, economic, and artistic/cultural development." The organization is volunteer run and facilitates about 250 events each year, which collectively generate about \$150,000 in economic activity in the community. It also partners with businesses to sell the work of local artists, facilitates the creation of pop-up art galleries in vacant store fronts and provides creative placemaking consultations to a local construction company. In addition, the NUNU Collective manages an international volunteer program—through which it offers free room and board to artists from around the world in exchange for 25 hours per week of community service—and a Creole French immersion initiative in partnership with Louisiana State University and with support from the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana.

- [CIRD Workshop in Bogalusa, Louisiana](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2006, CIRD held a workshop in rural Bogalusa, Louisiana, to address how to spur economic development to help the community recover from a hurricane. The Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism participated in the event and spoke about cultural development opportunities around the state.
- [Delta Creative Placemaking Initiative \(Delta Regional Authority\)](#): This is a pilot project of the Delta Regional Authority, a federal entity focused on improving the regional economies of the [252 counties and parishes](#) of the eight-state Mississippi Delta region. It aims to help local governments, economic development groups and other stakeholders leverage the arts to spark economic development. To that end, it is awarding grants to help small communities strategically integrate the arts into their economic and community development strategies. In October 2017, the initiative awarded grants to three Louisiana communities. Acadia Parish received \$15,000 to conduct an assessment of the economic and cultural activity in its community and to develop an economic development plan in response. Winnsboro received \$20,000 to build a community greenhouse and garden that would engage local youth in the art of food production and preparation and, as a result, help develop job skills. West Monroe received \$20,000 to develop a public art project while also implementing programs to encourage long-term sustainability and community engagement.
- [Homer, Louisiana](#): This town of about 3,000 people in northern Louisiana has leveraged the arts to revitalize its community infrastructure and economy. The collaboration of Main Street Homer, parish leaders, business leaders, individual artists, arts organizations and others resulted in a variety of successful cultural events, such as the Great Louisiana Harmonica Festival, Music on Main, the Reunion & Rhythm Festival, the Taste of Homer, Tablesapes for Streetscapes and the Claiborne Jubilee. These partners also have organized arts related workshops, contests, lectures and other events that foster creativity and cultural activities in the community. In addition, Main Street Homer—which has received funding from the Louisiana Division of the Arts—is working with the owners of vacant buildings to encourage renovations that provide more space for housing, studios and performance venues. The Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation has purchased and is renovating two historic buildings on the town square. The town has developed a "Shop Local Artists" initiative. In 2017, Homer Main Street participated in a training with Louisiana Main Street and Project for Public Spaces and received a seed grant for converting an abandoned lot into a festival park for music and art events.

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- [Louisiana Cultural District Annual Report 2016](#) (Louisiana Division of the Arts, 2017)
- ★ [The Economic Importance of Louisiana's Cultural Economy: An Update](#) (Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism, 2010)

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Maine Arts Commission

- [Maine-New Brunswick Cultural Initiative](#): In 2010, the state of Maine entered into an [international agreement](#) with its neighboring Canadian province of New Brunswick to form the Maine-New Brunswick Cultural Initiative. The initiative encourages cultural business and tourism opportunities, fosters exchange of cultural information, streamlines the border-crossing process for artists and facilitates cross-border collaboration on cultural projects. The Maine Arts Commission (MAC) participates in the initiative's [Cultural Exchange Task Force](#), which consists of arts professionals from both sides of the U.S.-Canada border and has undertaken artist residences, exhibitions, performance tours and convenings. Additionally, MAC's website features [related efforts and resources](#) that facilitate relationships between artists, arts organizations, arts audiences and other cultural stakeholders based in Maine and Canada. Examples include the Maine International Conference on the Arts, which focuses on the "intersections of creativity, industry, art and innovation," and [Two Nation Vacation](#), a cross-border tourism initiative featuring travel itineraries linking sites in Maine and New Brunswick. It also offers details on traveling across the border and addresses U.S. visa requirements for foreign artists working in the country, the steps in contracting performing artists from abroad and the process of withholding federal taxes applicable to their artist fees.
- [Creative Communities = Economic Development Grant](#): This program encourages cultural, economic and governmental sectors to work together to effect culturally based community and economic development. It has two phases. [Phase I: Cultural Plan](#) grants of up to \$10,000 help communities develop a cultural plan. [Phase II: Implementation](#) grants of up to \$75,000 over three years support implementation of community cultural plans and partnerships between municipalities and the cultural sector that foster creative economic development of their communities. Maine's many rural communities are eligible to apply to participate in the program.
- [Maine Arts Iditarod](#): This is the Maine Arts Commission's annual initiative to convene four regional meetings in rural parts of the state to connect with constituents and provide them with information, technical assistance and other resources. In 2018, each convening includes workshops on cultural tourism, strategic/business planning and board development.

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- [Tides Institute & Museum of Art](#): This museum is a cultural tourism engine for Eastport, Maine, which is the easternmost city in the United States, and other rural communities in the region. In particular, its [Artsipelego](#) program connects visitors to the arts and culture resources located throughout the international border region of Maine and New Brunswick, Canada. These include artist studios, historic gardens, lighthouses, galleries, arts centers, downtown commercial districts, farmers' markets, festivals and more. The museum, which is a Maine Arts Commission grantee, received two [ArtPlace grants](#) that enabled it to internationally expand its artist residency program and to develop its StudioWorks facility containing private studios, common work areas, and a ground-floor printmaking and letterpress studio.
- [Belfast Creative Coalition](#): Created in 2012, this organization provides leadership and development support to artists, cultural organizations and related businesses in a rural Waldo County. Its goal is to foster the creative economy. The group, which has received funding from the Maine Arts Commission, coordinates and markets cultural activities and promotes local artists and arts entrepreneurs. For example, its annual [Cultivate Farm & Art Fall Tour](#) connects residents and visitors with traditional artists, entrepreneurial crafters and "creative agriculturalists."
- [Waterfall Arts](#): This arts center is a cultural and creative economy anchor in rural, coastal Belfast, Maine, which benefits from the summer tourism industry. In addition to offering classes, workshops and a studio residency program, the organization supports the creative placemaking work of other groups. For example, it hosts the weekly farmers market and is involved with a number of other cultural efforts, such as the Art Market, Belfast Poetry Festival and Free Range Music Series. Waterfall Arts is a grantee of the Maine Arts Commission.

- [A Place for Makers](#): L/A Arts—the local arts agency of Lewiston and Auburn, Maine, and a grantee of the Maine Arts Commission—is working with Maine College of Art, the Lewiston Auburn Economic Growth Council and the Pratt Institute to help chart the "future of artisan manufacturing" in rural communities. Through a series of discussion and networking events, the program aims to enable arts entrepreneurs and artisan based manufacturers identify their physical space, technical and business needs. It also is helping them develop their brand identity. The National Endowment for the Arts has supported the effort through an Our Town grant. Learn more in its [funding announcement](#).

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- ★ [Maine-New Brunswick Cultural Initiative Task Force Phase 4 Report](#) (Maine-New Brunswick Cultural Task Force, 2016)
- [Maine Museums: An Economic Impact Study](#) (2010, Maine Arts Commission)
- [Maine's Creative Economy: Connecting Creativity, Commerce & Community](#) (2006, Maine's Creative Economy Council)

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Maryland State Arts Council

- [Arts & Entertainment Districts](#): Through this program, the Maryland State Arts Council certifies arts and entertainment districts in both rural and urban communities, which are then eligible for three tax incentives that spur creative economic development. A property tax incentive encourages developers and landowners to redevelop properties for artists and arts groups. The second incentive exempts artists selling their work in any of the state's 25 certified districts from paying income tax associated with their art sales. Finally, there is an abatement of the "admissions and amusement" tax generated by arts and entertainment events. [Analysis of the program](#) shows that it has spurred economic development. In 2016, 24 certified districts supported 8,594 jobs, which yielded \$267 million in wages, \$63.2 million in local and state tax revenue, and \$855.8 million in state GDP. In particular, some rural certified districts—such as those located in [Berlin](#), [Cambridge](#), [Cumberland](#), [Frederick](#) and [Leonardtwn](#)—have experienced significant economic development and downtown revitalization as a result of participating in the program.
- [Community Arts Development](#): This decentralized grant program is the Maryland State Arts Council's (MSAC) primary tool for supporting rural communities throughout the state. Through it, MSAC distributes operating funds to local arts councils located in 23 counties and Baltimore City. One example of local arts councils supporting rural creative economic development is the [Talbot County Arts Council](#), which funds about 40 arts organizations in Eastern Shore communities, including Easton and St. Michaels, which are major cultural tourist destinations. Another is the [Garrett County Arts Council](#), serving the western part of the state, which showcases and sells the work of more than 150 regional artists and was instrumental in the formation of two of Maryland's certified Arts & Entertainment Districts. In fiscal year 2018, it is hiring a staff person responsible for coordinating the economic development of the two certified districts.

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- [Eat. Drink. Buy Art. on Delmarva](#): This a marketing effort of Tourism, Arts, Downtown Development, a network of 18 communities in Maryland and Delaware on the Delmarva Peninsula. It includes a website, a monthly e-mail newsletter, a phone app, and Twitter and Facebook newsfeeds designed to help cultural tourists experience the artists, arts venues, restaurants and related events in participating communities. The project receives financial support from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.
- [Evergreen Heritage Center](#): Located on a historic 130-acre farm, this museum in rural western Maryland celebrates the region's culture and heritage of agriculture. The center offers a wide array of programming, including a healthy living initiative, STEM field trips for students and science camps. It supports the arts through its Arts/Agriculture Studio. The museum works with the Allegany Arts Council to run the local Arts in Schools

Program, which receives funding from the Maryland State Arts Council. The center also has received funding from the [Appalachian Regional Commission](#).

- [Allegany County Creative Placemaking Initiative](#): This Allegany Arts Council initiative began with a summit in 2014. Since then, it has focused on renovating a downtown pedestrian mall in Cumberland, Maryland—a community of about 20,000 in rural western Maryland—and supporting arts programming in the city's cultural district as well as in the cultural district of nearby Frostburg. The council, which receives financial support from the Maryland State Council on the Arts, has created a [Placemaking Grant program](#) through which it awards up to \$5,000 to support "projects such as open air performances, murals and other public art, arts walks, pop-up events and galleries, artist relocation and residency programs, outdoor workshops, mobile children's programming, and festivals." The council has contracted a placemaking consultant to guide its efforts.
- [Denton Artsway](#): This Arts & Entertainment District, certified by the Maryland State Arts Council, is located in Denton, a rural community of about 4,500 residents on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The district—which is managed by Caroline County in collaboration with a local committee that helps facilitate marketing, programming and business services—helps draw cultural tourists to the community and is an economic stimulus. It also has helped revitalize two blighted properties into arts assets: a community arts gallery and a fiber arts center.

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- ★ [Maryland Arts and Entertainment Districts Impact Analysis FY 2016](#) (Maryland State Arts Council, 2017)
- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Maryland](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)
- [Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland: FY 2015](#) (Maryland State Arts Council, 2015)

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Mass Cultural Council

- [Cultural Districts](#): Through this program, the Mass Cultural Council certifies cultural districts, which in turn leverage the distinction to encourage arts entrepreneurship, cultural tourism and creative economic development in their communities. Several of the certified districts are in rural communities, including the [Turners Falls Cultural District](#), [North Adams Cultural District](#), [Crossroads Cultural District](#) and [Cottage Street Cultural District](#). Three other rural communities are in the process of applying for certification.
- [Adams Arts Program](#): This program awards grants to both rural and urban communities for efforts that leverage cultural assets to spark economic growth. Its goals are to revitalize communities, stimulate income, create jobs and attract tourism. The program, which began in 2014, ended in 2017. The Mass Cultural Council is developing a replacement program that will better reflect the state's current creative economy.
- [Cultural Tourism 101](#): This on-line resource features an extensive array of cultural tourism technical-assistance resources. It includes a primer on what cultural tourism is and how it benefits local economies. It also provides recommendations for implementing initiatives, a list of on-line resources and guidance on how to connect with a state-sponsored Regional Tourism Council, among other tips.

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- [UMass Amherst Arts Extension Service](#): Since its founding in 1973, the Arts Extension Service located at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, has been fostering the intersections of the arts and community. It supports artists, arts entrepreneurs, arts managers and other arts stakeholders through research, publications, workshops, university courses, and [degree and certificate programs](#). It also manages, on behalf of the National Endowment for the Arts, the [National Arts Policy Archive and Library](#). Its [Arts Entrepreneurship Initiative](#) provides training, consulting services and internships to local artists and arts entrepreneurs, many of whom live in a rural community, in effort to support the growth of the creative economy.

- [Double Edge Theatre](#): This artist-owned ensemble theatre, which is a grantee of the Mass Cultural Council, is an engine of economic and community development in rural Ashfield, Massachusetts, a town of about 1,800 residents. In 2017, the theatre—which is located on 100 acres of a former dairy farm—began a project to transform vacant and underutilized farm buildings into an arts campus and cultural anchor that will demonstrate how integrating artistic actions and rural identity can yield economic growth. ArtPlace supported the effort; learn more in its [funding description](#). The theatre is also well-known for working with municipal officials, farmers and other local leaders to coordinate and present the [Ashfield Town Spectacle & Culture Fair](#), a multidisciplinary arts event that takes place at various venues throughout the community. Since the event began in 2002, it has become a cultural tourism draw and a cohesive force for the community. The event's production depends on the support and participation of many residents, artists and non-artists alike, whose partnership is a public expression of art and democracy.
- [Berkshire Film and Media Commission](#): This commission, which has received funding from the Mass Cultural Council, was established to help attract film productions to western Massachusetts. Its goal is to foster a vibrant film community in this rural part of the state. It highlights locations and professional talent in the region for the benefit of location and talent scouts in the film and television industries. The group also promotes state tax incentives available to film productions.
- [Old Stone Mill Center of Arts and Creative Engineering](#): This organization—based in rural Adams, Massachusetts—is restoring a historic mill as a maker space that will process community waste and serve as a center for economic innovation. The project aims to integrate the arts, science and technology to address "environmental challenges and economic disinvestment" in a rural context. Project organizers anticipate it will foster the region's growing identity as a creative and cultural haven attractive to new residents and businesses. Learn more in a [summary](#) by ArtPlace, which has supported the project.
- [Turners Falls RiverCulture](#): This partnership of leaders from the arts and business communities of Turners Falls, Massachusetts, is committed to enhancing and promoting cultural programming to foster local economic development. Among other things, the group organizes cooperative marketing efforts for cultural events and contributes to the town's other economic development initiatives. In 2011, RiverCulture received a [Massachusetts Commonwealth Award for Creative Community](#) from the Mass Cultural Council for its efforts to leverage the arts to improve education, economic vitality and quality of life. It also has received grant funding from the Mass Cultural Council.
- [Three Rivers Artists Community Knowledge](#): This initiative—which is a partnership of the Palmer Historical and Cultural Center, Palmer Redevelopment Authority, Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce and Quabog Valley Community Development Corporation—leveraged Mass Cultural Council funding to help develop the central business district of rural Three Rivers. It supports local artists, business owners and landlords through workshops, technical assistance and cross-promotional strategies. It provides marketing assistance to business and property owners looking to rent vacant space. The project also organizes community events, such as artist fairs, to increase downtown foot traffic.
- [MASS MoCA](#): This contemporary art museum in rural western Massachusetts, which is a grantee of the Mass Cultural Council, has become a mainstay of the Berkshire County economy, according to two reports: [Culture and Revitalization: The Economic Effects of MASS MoCA on Its Community](#) (2006) and [The Economic Impact of MASS MoCA in 2017](#) (2017).

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- [It Works. Work It...](#) (Mass Cultural Council, 2017)
- [The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Cultural Organizations and Their Audiences in the State of Massachusetts \(Fiscal Year 2015\)](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)
- ★ [Berkshire Creative Economy Report](#) (Mt. Auburn Associates, 2007)

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Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs

- [Regional Regranting Program](#): This is the main vehicle through which the Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs (MCACA) supports the arts and arts based economic development in rural communities. Through the program, MCACA awards grant funds to 15 regional regranting agencies around the state. There are two components of the funding. Arts Projects grants award up to \$4,000 for locally developed, high-quality arts and cultural projects. Professional Development grants provide up to \$1,500 to help arts organizations and arts professionals "acquire services or skills to strengthen the administrative infrastructure of the organization."

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- [Crosshatch Center for Art & Ecology](#): This nonprofit organization, located in a rural Bellaire, Michigan, works to build "strong communities through the intersections of art, farming, ecology and economy." It supports a broad array of efforts, including an artist residency, a microloan initiative and a guild program.
- [Northwest Michigan Arts & Culture Summit](#): This convening is a program of the Northwest Michigan Arts Network, a group of artists, arts organizations, businesses and community buildings with a stake in rural Michigan's creative sector. The [2017 summit](#) featured conversations about rural economic development.
- [Creative Placemaking Summit](#): This annual event, which began in 2015, is facilitated by the [Arts Council of Greater Lansing](#), a grantee of the Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs. It convenes artists, arts professionals, public officials, urban planners, developers and others to share ideas, encourage collaboration and spark action.
- [Michigan State University Extension](#): Michigan State University Extension has several resources supporting creative placemaking and creative economic development in both rural and urban communities. It published a guidebook—[Placemaking as an Economic Development Tool: A Placemaking Guidebook](#)—and conducted a two-part webinar about cultural tourism.
- [Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Regional Commission \(CUPPAD\)](#): This is one of 14 regional planning commissions in Michigan. It was founded in 1968 to provide planning and economic development services throughout six rural counties (and their 87 communities) in Michigan's rural Upper Peninsula. The organization supports the arts and creative placemaking in a number of ways. As a Regional Regranting partner of the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA), it redistributes MCACA funding through small grants supporting arts and cultural activities. Through its [Regional Prosperity Initiative](#), CUPPAD awards grants of \$500-\$5,000 to local governments and nonprofit organizations to help them "initiate or improve placemaking principles in their local communities." It also has received funding from ArtPlace to support Arts Midwest's [Upper Peninsula Arts and Culture Alliance](#)—which consists of artists, artisans, arts groups, tourism professionals, economic developers, and representatives from local and regional governments—and a related exploration of "the role of the arts and culture sector in creating community vibrancy as well as supporting the growing tourism industry."

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- [Creative State: 2016 Creative Industries Report](#) (Creative Many, 2016)

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Minnesota State Arts Board

- [Regional Arts Councils](#): This decentralized grant program is the Minnesota State Arts Board's (MSAB) primary mechanism for supporting rural communities around the state. Through it, MSAB awards funding to 11 regional arts councils, which, in turn, regrant the money to support arts and culture efforts at the local level. Many of the regional arts councils serve rural areas. The Regional Arts Councils program is underwritten in part by

[Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund](#), which every year receives 19.75% of the principal of the Clean Water & Legacy Amendment Trust Fund. Per a 2008 amendment to the state's constitution, the trust fund grows through an annual allocation from the state amounting to 0.375% of the state's sales tax revenue.

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- [Springboard for the Arts](#): This economic and community development organization is run by artists for artists. It works to build stronger communities, neighborhoods and economies via the arts. It has an office in St. Paul and one in Fergus Falls, a rural community of about 13,500 residents that has become an exemplar of creative placemaking and creative economic development. Springboard for the Arts, which is a grantee of the Minnesota State Arts Board, has a number of programs that support creative economic development and/or rural arts activities. The [Rural Arts & Culture Summit](#) is a biennial event convening rural artists, arts organizations and community and economic development leaders. Its goal is to build capacity for long-term partnerships between artists and rural communities through professional development workshops and cross-sector dialogue. Springboard partners with [Kiva](#), a nonprofit organization offering microloans to artist-entrepreneurs. [Work of Art: Business Skills for Artists](#) is the organization's professional development curriculum for arts entrepreneurship. The curriculum is realized through a series of workshops and is distilled in a free on-line workbook, [The Work of Art Toolkit](#), and the companion [Work of Art Toolkit Guide](#). Springboard maintains a roster of [Artist Career Consultants](#) who are available for a fee to work one-on-one with artists developing their creative career. Springboard's office in rural Fergus Falls has a [Resources Center](#) where individual artists and small organizations can access a full array of equipment, tools and services in an informal, self-directed environment. In addition, Springboard publishes a free [Guide for Business Districts to Work with Local Artists](#), a toolkit with a focus on creative placemaking. Finally, the [20/20 Artist Fellowship](#) is a new program that supports artists of color, Native American artists, small artist-run businesses and small artist collectives that are "creating community-centered and asset-based solutions to the systemic and structural disadvantages that are facing artists of color and Native artists in Minnesota." In 2018, the program will award two fellowships, each of which comes with an unrestricted award of \$20,000 and a \$5,000 professional development stipend.
- [Lanesboro Arts Campus](#): In 2014, the Lanesboro City Council passed a resolution recognizing the entire town of Lanesboro, Minnesota—a town of about 1,000 residents—as an "arts campus." The effort yokes art, design and history to leverage existing natural and cultural assets to stimulate the local economy and improve quality of life. The project has addressed a number of issues pertinent to downtown revitalization, such as vacant storefronts, historic preservation, pedestrian safety and parking. ArtPlace has awarded a grant to support the effort. Learn more in its [funding announcement](#). Lanesboro Arts, the local cultural council that serves as the anchor organization for the campus initiative, receives state funding through the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Minnesota Land and Legacy Fund.
- [Sprout Growers & Makers Marketplace](#): This is a year-round, 20,000-square foot indoor market in rural Little Falls, Minnesota, that features local food and original artwork and contributes to the local economy. In addition to the retail area, the space includes a food processing facility and a demonstration kitchen. It also offers business training for growers and artists. It is a program of the Region Five Development Commission, which received in an ArtPlace grant in 2016. Learn more in ArtPlace's [description](#) of this regional project that celebrates art, culture, and local food.
- [Minnesota Regional Network Working Group of the Next Generation Initiative](#): The Next Generation Initiative—a collaboration between the Art of the Rural and the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) focused on supporting the arts and creative placemaking in rural America—has a Minnesota Rural Networking Working Group. The network is [cochaired](#) by Springboard for the Arts and U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Minnesota.
- [4 Directions Development](#): This community development group—which provides technical assistance, education and financing—is helping turn a former tribal college on the Red Lake reservation into a community hub with a performing arts center and creative business incubator. The goal of the effort is to create new economic opportunities for tribal members living in rural northern Minnesota. It has received support from ArtPlace, which has a [summary](#) of the project on its website.

- [New London Riverspace Project](#): In 2014, the municipal government of rural New London, Minnesota, began an effort to unite three community assets: a vibrant downtown corridor, a beautiful river that runs through town and a significant artist population. The goal of the project is to install public art made by local artists along the river so as to enliven an underused green space, create community gathering places and connect the waterfront to the commercial district. ArtPlace awarded a grant in support of the endeavor in 2014. Read its [funding announcement](#) for more information about the project.
- [Iron Range Makerspace](#): This is a maker space/incubator/co-working facility located in Hibbing, Minnesota, a rural community in northern Minnesota with a population of about 16,000. It aims to serve as the "innovation center for the entire Iron Range." The facility "houses everything a creative mind needs to succeed," such as a metal working bay, wood shop, textile area, recording studio and commercial kitchen. Its [Iron Range Entrepreneurship Center](#) provides training and mentorships to entrepreneurs, artists, tinkerers and other creative individuals. The program supports entrepreneurs trying to expand their existing business as well as creative people trying to launch a commercial endeavor.

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- ★ [Creative MN: The Impact of Minnesota's Artists, Creative Workers, and Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations](#) (Creative Minnesota, 2017)

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Mississippi Arts Commission

- [Mississippi's Creative Economy Website](#): A collaboration between the Mississippi Arts Commission and the Mississippi Development Authority, this website is designed to educate business leaders, policymakers and the public about the importance of creativity to the state's economy. It contains resources about the role of the arts and culture in creating jobs and broadening economic opportunities, including recommendations for how communities can grow their own creative economy. It also features a [video](#) of Governor Haley Barbour (R) promoting the state's creative industries as well as a number of video vignettes highlighting creative economy success stories in the state.
- [Mississippi Blues Trail](#): A project of the Mississippi Blues Commission, the trail facilitates cultural tourism through many rural communities. It features a number of museums dedicated to musical legends, such as B.B. King, Elvis Presley, Howlin' Wolf, Jimmie Rodgers, Robert Johnson and Mississippi John Hurt.
- [Arts and Culture Festivals in Rural Communities](#): The Mississippi Arts Commission supports several festivals in rural communities that yield local economic benefits. The [Muscadine Jubilee](#) (Pelahatchie, Mississippi) has been happening annually for 37 years in a town of about 1,400. [Mississippi Delta Blues & Heritage Festival](#) (Greenville, Mississippi) calls itself "the OLDEST continuously operating blues festival in the WORLD." And the [Great Delta Bear Affair](#) (Rolling Folk, Mississippi) is a music festival created to encourage repatriation of the Louisiana Black Bear in the state.

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- [Mississippi Center for Cultural Production](#): Located in rural Utica, Mississippi, a town of about 800 people, this organization facilitates "the research, development, marketing, and commerce of agricultural products—through film, photography, audio stories, small and large scale agriculture, and culinary arts—that speak to the history and future" of the community. It provides technical assistance, education and mentoring in agribusiness in support of low- and moderate-income people. ArtPlace awarded a grant in support of the effort in 2016. See its [description](#) of the project to learn more.
- [Crossroads Cultural Arts Center](#): The Crossroads Cultural Arts Center in Clarksdale, Mississippi, a rural town of about 16,000 residents in the Mississippi Delta, includes an art gallery, creative spaces for learning, performance space and retail space. It is a cultural anchor for the community and contributes to the local economy. In 2014, ArtPlace supported it through a grant; learn more in its [funding announcement](#).

- [Cultural Blueprint for Health](#): The City of Natchez, Mississippi, and its local partners—including the Natchez Art Association, Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture & Museum, Alcorn State University, and IDEAS xLab, a group that leverages the arts to create healthier communities and inclusive economies—are working on a project that aims to demonstrate the economic and cultural benefits of arts-integrated health care. The project features artist residencies, community-guided artist interventions designed to inspire healthier living practices and research on how the arts impact community health. A special focus of it will be the issues of health equity in a community where low-income communities of color account for half the population. Learn more about the initiative in an announcement of a 2016 [Our Town grant](#) from the National Endowment for the Arts that is supporting it. The City of Natchez and Alcorn State University both have received funding from the Mississippi Arts Commission.
- [CIRD Workshop in Picayune, Biloxi and Laurel, Mississippi](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2006, CIRD held three workshops in Mississippi in response to Hurricane Katrina to address how small communities could "use available land to accommodate the post-Katrina population surge and to create a tighter urban fabric." The workshops addressed the protection of natural and cultural assets. The executive director of the Mississippi Arts Commission was one of the featured speakers.
- [Delta Creative Placemaking Initiative \(Delta Regional Authority\)](#): This is a pilot project of the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) designed to help local communities and their economic development groups to connect more deeply with the arts and culture sector of the Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions in order to generate creative economic development. Through the effort, DRA is awarding grants to help small communities integrate arts and culture activities into their economic and community development strategies. Participating communities also are undertaking efforts to promote their arts and culture assets to encourage cultural tourism. In October 2017, the initiative awarded grants to two small Mississippi communities. Greenwood received \$20,000 to leverage local resources to combat blight by redefining concepts of waste and empowering underserved residents through job training, apprenticeships and entrepreneurial development. Duck Hill received \$25,000 to establish cultural opportunities for community growth and to preserve downtown historic properties.

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- ★ [Realizing the Economic Potential of Creativity in Mississippi](#) (Mississippi Development Authority, Mississippi Arts Commission, Regional Technology Strategies, Inc., and Alliance for Creative Advantage, 2011)

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Missouri Arts Council

- [Ghost Light](#): Through this former project, the Missouri Arts Council (MAC) ensured that small, rural and other underserved communities—especially those lacking a mature arts infrastructure—could realize the civic and economic benefits of the arts. Specifically, MAC funded and facilitated accessible and affordable arts performances in communities that had not benefited recently from its services. MAC worked with state representatives to locate nontraditional performance venues, such as public schools and libraries, in participating communities without arts organizations and spaces. It also collaborated with local partners to manage marketing, booking and other logistics for the performances, helping to build community capacity to present future arts events.
- [Express Grants](#): This program is the Missouri Arts Council's (MAC) main mechanism for supporting rural communities. Through it, MAC awards grants to local arts councils as well as small and emerging arts organizations working beyond Missouri's population centers. Funding is available for art projects, arts education, touring performances and more.

- **Alchemy Award**: This honorary award recognizes the state's economic developers—including individuals, businesses and organizations—that leverage the arts to create jobs, develop the work force or generally enhance the economy. It celebrates the transformative power of the arts, which can turn the ordinary into the extraordinary in business just as in language, paint or stone. Through the program, the Missouri Arts Council (MAC) highlights successful examples of creativity and innovation at work transmuting business into an economic force. MAC selects honorees based on how they leverage arts and culture to spur economic development, the community impact of that development and the potential to replicate it.

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- **Oregon County Food Producers and Artisan Co-op Culture Hub**: In 2016, the Coalition for Ozarks Living Traditions began an effort to create the architectural design and plan for expanding the Oregon County Food Producers and Artisan Co-op Culture Hub. The co-op—which is located in Alton, Missouri, a mountain community of fewer than 1,000 residents—is not just a retail outlet but also a community space that supports local culture. It hosts music events, workshops and art exhibitions. The origin of the expansion effort is a [Citizens' Institute on Rural Design \(CIRD\) workshop](#) held in Oregon County, Missouri, in 2014. (CIRD is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability.") The National Endowment for the Arts supported the effort through an Our Town grant; learn more in its [funding announcement](#).
- **Delta Creative Placemaking Initiative (Delta Regional Authority)**: This is a pilot project of the Delta Regional Authority, a federal entity focused on improving the regional economies of the [252 counties and parishes](#) of the eight-state Mississippi Delta region. It aims to help local governments, economic development groups and other stakeholders leverage the arts to spark economic development. To that end, it is awarding grants to help small communities strategically integrate the arts into their economic and community development strategies. In October 2017, the initiative awarded a \$25,000 grant to Caruthersville, Missouri, a town of about 6,000 residents, to create an arts center and business incubator in the community's downtown corridor.
- **MU Extension Community Arts Program**: This program—which is a partnership between the University of Missouri and University of Missouri Extension—fosters community and economic development through the arts. To that end, it offers trainings and workshops on cultural tourism and arts based economic development to participating communities. Educational offerings are led by faculty from the university's arts department and the extension service. One rural community that has benefited from participating the program is [Lexington, Missouri](#).
- **Services for Rural Missouri**: Through this on-line resource, the Missouri Department of Economic Development spotlights best practices in and strategic plans for community and economic development in rural communities. One of the initiatives featured is [Naturally Meramec](#), which unites "agribusiness and agritourism."

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Missouri](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)

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Montana Arts Council

- **Montana Artrepreneur Program**: This art-centered business development program aims to expand entrepreneurial opportunities for rural visual artists. Participating artists receive personal coaching from successful working artists and other training through a 10-month certification process designed to sharpen their business skills and marketing practices. Participants develop an "Artrepreneur's Toolbox" with a number a resources designed to help them further their arts business. In 2015, MAC reported that the program enabled

participating artists to [increase their net art sales by 391%](#). In 2017, MAC staff shared anecdotal stories of how the program has benefited Montana's arts entrepreneurs:

- One certified MAP artist that began working full-time as an artist and gallery owner reported in 2015 that she netted \$92,800 from selling her own work and \$23,200 from selling other people's work.
- Another certified MAP artist has a thriving fiber arts business and has published a guidebook on weaving and recorded three associated instructional videos.
- [Building Arts Participation](#): This is a former program of the Montana Arts Council (MAC) that facilitated rural community engagement through the arts. The initiative, which was supported in part by a grant from The Wallace Foundation, provided funding to 12 arts organizations in rural Montana to develop an arts participation plan. MAC subsequently awarded additional funding to seven of these groups to enable them to implement their plan. Participating groups reported increasing their audience and revenue as a result of the program. While no longer operational, the program was successful—as MAC describes [here](#) and [here](#)—and subsequently influenced the development of MAC's Montana Artrepreneur Program.

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- [CIRD Workshop in Red Lodge, Montana](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2016, CIRD held a workshop in Red Lodge, Montana, a town of 2,200, about rehabilitating and repurposing an older school building as a multiuse cultural arts space. The discussion addressed the economic potential of the arts space and also focused on how to connect it to the town's history and cultural heritage.
- [Red Ants Pants Music Festival](#): This festival attracts nearly 9,000 people to White Sulphur Springs, Montana, which has a population of 950. It is hosted by the Red Ants Pants Foundation, the philanthropic arm of a women's work-wear company based in the town. The state estimates that the festival generates between \$2.5 million and \$3.5 million in revenue for the community. Additionally, since the festival began, jobs in the surrounding county have grown at a rate of 19.5%, nearly twice the 11% rate for the nation and nearly three times the 7% rate for Montana.
- [East Helena Food & Culture Hub](#): This is a culinary arts training program of the Myrna Loy Center, a cultural organization in Helena, Montana, that has received funding from the Montana Arts Council. The program is rooted in the Eastern European tradition of storytelling and is designed to be part of a strategy of cultural tourism and economic development. ArtPlace awarded a grant in support of the effort in 2017; learn more in its [funding description](#).
- [WaterWorks](#): The Mountain Time Arts Collaborative produces WaterWorks, a series of site-specific performances throughout the Gallatin Watershed in southwest Montana—which is the source of the Missouri River—"to focus on drought and threats to water security in the face of the rapid population growth and environmental shifts predicted for the coming decades." The arts events are the product of an interdisciplinary teams of artists, agriculturalists, naturalists, historians and scientists. The effort has received support from an [ArtPlace grant](#).

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- ★ [Program Evaluation Detailed Report: Montana Artrepreneur Program Artists' Sales and Impact on Household Income 2009-2014](#) (Montana Arts Council, 2016)
- ★ [Economic Benefits of the Arts in Montana](#) (Montana Department of Labor, 2012)

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Nebraska Arts Council

- [Office on Wheels](#): Through this program, every summer the Nebraska Arts Council (NAC) takes a number of multiday trips throughout the state to visit grantees and other constituents to provide various types of technical assistance, including strategic planning, board development, project planning and resource sharing. NAC staff also make an effort to visit rural communities that have received little or no previous support from NAC in effort to initiate a relationship that could lead to future NAC support. While the program does not have a specific economic development goal, NAC staff members anecdotally report that their outreach efforts have helped rural communities strengthen their economies through the arts.
- [Mastering the Arts](#): The Nebraska Arts Council is contributing to this four-year structural investment in a stronger rural work force. The initiative is providing arts focused professional development to teachers from seven low-achieving rural elementary schools serving Native American and Latino students. Underwritten by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, it is helping K-12 classroom and specialist teachers work toward a master's degree at Wayne State College focused on integrating technology and standards based arts instruction across curricula. In addition to completing the coursework—including math, music and movement; science and visual images; history and mixed media; and language and performing arts—participating teachers learn from teaching artists and cultural organizations through weekend workshops, a five-day summer institute and field based travel experiences. The Nebraska Arts Council is providing the interface between Mastering the Arts teacher-students and the participating teaching artists and cultural groups it is helping to recruit.

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- [Library Innovation Studios](#): This initiative is developing creative maker spaces in rural libraries to expand their role as "community anchor organizations that facilitate economic and community development." Through the initiative, 30 rural libraries are hosting on a rotating basis (for 20 weeks each) one of four maker spaces. Each participating library is supported by a Community Action Team that encourages residents' use of the maker space, facilitates equipment training and more. By strengthening the maker culture in rural areas, the initiative aims to increase community buoyancy and facilitate local economic development and entrepreneurship. Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts (R) announced the project's first 18 library partners in October 2017. The project is a joint effort of the Nebraska Library Commission, University of Nebraska—Lincoln, Nebraska Innovation Studio, Nebraska Extension and Nebraska Regional Library Systems. It is supported in part by a grant from the national Institute of Museum and Library Services.
- [Byway of Art](#): This "socially-engaged art project about community process and participation" was an effort of the Center of Rural Affairs, which has received funding from the Nebraska Arts Council. Through it, this nonprofit that fosters rural development worked with artists, tradespersons and other residents in four rural towns to create and install public art that reflects the uniqueness of each community. The project also created a festival to encourage cultural tourism. ArtPlace has supported the effort. Learn more in its [funding announcement](#).
- [Striv Inc.](#): This company, which is based in Henderson, Nebraska, a town with fewer than 1,000 residents, provides on-line video streaming and other on-line media services to 70 high schools throughout Nebraska. It live-streams athletic events, concerts, class presentations, graduations and more so that parents, grandparents and community members can virtually attend an event if they can't be present in person due to geographic distance or weather conditions. The company also has an educational component, called [Striv U](#), through which it teaches students how to use the tools of the digital media profession. Specifically, students learn—through a class course or an extracurricular club—how to live-stream an event, play-call a game, use Photoshop, use social media for marketing and more.
- [Art at Cedar Point](#): This is an experimental project aimed at connecting creative people with rural communities and natural ecosystems to learn how each can benefit the other. It is an initiative of the [University of Nebraska Kearney Center for Entrepreneurship and Rural Development](#), which provides entrepreneurship coaching and technical assistance. The center's other programs include the Central Nebraska Business Ideas Contest, the Rural

Futures Competitive Awards Program and a variety of research projects focusing on sustainable rural economic advancement.

- [CIRD Workshop in Hallam and Bennet, Nebraska](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2015, CIRD and the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department held a workshop that focused on "Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper" placemaking projects for Hallam and Bennet, Nebraska, which have a combined population of about 1,000. Following the event, each town realized low-cost, temporary projects that let their residents "experiment with different possibilities for a space without having to incur the high cost of a major development project." Hallam added creative traffic-calming infrastructure and public gathering spaces. Bennet created a temporary splash park and hosted an outdoor movie.

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Nevada Arts Council

- [Nevada Circuit Rider Program](#): This program provides affordable technical assistance to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations in rural areas around the state. One component of it is the Nevada Circuit Rider Roster, which features experienced consultants preselected by a panel of community arts specialists whose services are available to participating arts organizations at an affordable price. The Nevada Arts Council also awards [Nevada Circuit Rider Grants](#) of up to \$4,000 to help offset the costs of hiring a roster consultant. The program is designed to strengthen the capacity of arts groups, and consultants can specifically address topics such as business planning, program design, fiscal management, governance, fundraising, marketing, cultural diversity and technology utilization.
- [Artrepreneur Workshops](#): In 2017, the Nevada Arts Council (NAC) facilitated a series of workshops to support artists in cultivating their business and marketing skills. During these workshops—which NAC offered as a pilot program—artists learned how to create an on-line presence, use social media for marketing, apply for artist residencies, work with gallerists, develop competitive grant applications and more. Many participants hailed from rural communities.
- [Rural-Urban Exchange Research](#): The Nevada Arts Council's (NAC) 2016 annual conference addressed rural creative placemaking and economic development issues, and its 2017 conference featured a session about rural-urban exchanges and how they could benefit communities in Nevada. Since then, NAC has been exploring the possibility of creating such a rural-urban exchange program. Its research has included talking with constituents about their needs and looking at similar programs in operation.
- [Nevada Main Street](#): The Nevada Arts Council is actively involved with Nevada Main Street, which is developing as a state agency as it just was authorized and funded legislatively at the beginning of 2017. NAC wants to ensure that the arts and culture remain part of Nevada Main Street's rural economic development activities.

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- [Western Folklife Center](#): This cultural center, which is a Nevada Arts Council grantee, includes an exhibition gallery, a 300-seat theatre, a smaller black box theatre and a historic saloon. Located in rural Elko, Nevada, it is a cultural tourism destination that annually hosts the [National Cowboy Poetry Gathering](#), a festival of poets, musicians, artisans and storytellers who share tales of working the land. The event attracts thousands of attendees and performers every year. In 2015, the Western Folklife Center received an [ArtPlace grant](#) to revitalize a six-block-long parking lot as "pedestrian-friendly green space with commercial storefronts and public amenities." The organization will activate the revitalized space and increase foot traffic in downtown Elko through new cultural programming.
- [Eureka Restoration Enterprise](#): This nonprofit organization in rural Eureka, Nevada—a town of fewer than 1,000 residents—is helping revitalize the community's downtown corridor through the arts. Since the organization

began in 2015, it has renovated a derelict grocery store in a historic building to create its headquarters; organized the Art, Wine, and Music Fest; and leveraged funding from the Nevada Arts Council to commission two murals on downtown buildings. The organization also has opened a gallery space where it sells only Nevada-produced artwork, craftwork and artisanal products.

- [Ely Renaissance Society](#): This group—which describes itself as being "devoted to the restoration and celebration of the people, the art and the culture of a true western town"—fosters cultural tourism and related economic development in rural Ely, Nevada. This community of about 4,300 residents has a history of weathering "boom or bust" cycles related to mining, the Pony Express, the railroad and the Lincoln Highway. As a result of the Ely Renaissance Society's work, the town today has 22 murals and an associated walking tour. It also is the home to the Ely Renaissance Village, a living-history museum spread across a number of historic buildings. The Ely Art Bank is a gallery that promotes local artists and helps them become arts entrepreneurs.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Nevada](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)

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New Hampshire State Council on the Arts

- [Commission to Study the Economic Impact of Arts and Culture](#): The New Hampshire State Council on the Arts (NHSCA) contributed to the New Hampshire Commission to Study the Economic Impact of Arts and Culture by collecting stories (500 words or fewer) from state residents about the economic, educational and social benefits of the arts and culture in their communities. The commission was legislatively created in 2015 and has 17 members, including NHSCA, other state agencies, state lawmakers and representatives from the state's arts and culture sector. Its mission is to help legislators and other policymakers take action to enhance and expand the creative economy in New Hampshire. The commission's work culminated in 2016 when it published its [final report](#).
- [General Project Grants for Community Engagement](#): Through this program, the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts awards grants of \$750-\$4,500 to enable nonprofit organizations, Main Street programs, municipalities and schools to bring the arts to local communities to enhance citizens' quality of life, attract visitors and help stimulate local economies. A significant portion of the program supports rural projects.

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- [New Hampshire Creative Communities Network](#): This is a statewide consortium of local arts councils, arts organizations, Main Street programs, chambers of commerce and economic development agencies. Its mission is to leverage the arts to strengthen and promote economic and community development across New Hampshire. To that end, it has a free, on-line [Creative Economy Toolkit](#). Network members meet in person three times per year to share resources, discuss issues such as cultural tourism and asset mapping, and plan collaborative, capacity building projects. The consortium began with the support of a grant from the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, which continues to provide administrative support to the effort.
- [West Claremont Center for Music and the Arts](#): Since this nonprofit started in 2008, it has been working to establish rural Claremont, New Hampshire, "as a center of diverse cultural activity" and to "encourage pride and involvement in the community." The organization presents concerts and kids' performances. It also offers music-instruction classes and workshops for adults and students. Its [Opus Arts Project](#) fosters a network of local arts professionals by facilitating opportunities for them to convene, share and learn. In 2014, the group helped lead the community's 250th anniversary by building a large outdoor sculpture, commissioning an orchestral work and working with local artists in other ways.
- [Arts Alive](#): This is a nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing the "quality of life" in the rural Monadnock region of New Hampshire—known as the state's "Cultural Corner"—by supporting the arts, culture and the

creative economy. The group, which has received funding from the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, supports the creative economy in several ways. It has a Creative Economy Database listing artists and other arts entrepreneurs working in the region. Its website features a Creative Businesses Resources page, which includes creative economy data, cultural tourism information, a tool for researching grant opportunities, and a database of artist residencies and performance opportunities. In addition, the organization works with the Monadnock Travel Council, local chambers of commerce and downtown groups to run the [Discover Monadnock](#) program, which encourages cultural tourism in the region.

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- ★ [Commission to Study the Economic Impact of the Arts and Culture in New Hampshire: Final Report](#) (Commission to Study the Economic Impact of the Arts and Culture in New Hampshire, 2016)

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New Jersey State Council on the Arts

- [South Jersey Marketing & Cultural Tourism Initiative](#): Although New Jersey is a largely urban state according to Census Bureau metropolitan classifications, the "South Jersey" region has many rural attributes. With the exception of the Philadelphia suburbs, the southern region of the state is comparatively [lower in population density](#) and includes pine barren forests and salt marshes as well as beaches. The New Jersey State Council on the Arts (NJSCA) has a dedicated program for assisting the development of the arts in this eight-county region through a long-standing partnership with the [South Jersey Cultural Alliance](#). Through this initiative, NJSCA helps support the ever-growing cultural industry in South Jersey with an array of services including technical assistance, professional development, networking opportunities and marketing programs under the umbrella of the [Discover Jersey Arts](#) campaign.
- [Art Matters](#): A joint initiative of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and ArtPride New Jersey, this interactive website promotes New Jersey by documenting how arts and culture are transforming local communities. Users can explore videos about the economic, educational, civic and health benefits of the arts. Several videos focus on rural communities in the southern and northwestern part of the state.

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- [Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission](#): This local arts agency, which has received grant support from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, serves a rural county in the western part of the state. It provides technical assistance to local artists and arts organizations through professional development workshops. It also supports several cultural tourism activities, including an arts tour and several arts festivals. The commission works closely with the Hunterdon County economic development director.
- [Cape May Creative Placemaking Plan](#): With the intent of capitalizing on its existing cultural and natural assets, the beach town of Cape May, New Jersey—a community of about 3,500 year-round residents—launched a creative placemaking planning process in 2009 in partnership with the Temple University School of Environmental Design. In 2014, the process resulted in the Cape May Creative Placemaking Plan, which was adopted by resolution of the City Planning Board into the Cape May City Master Plan.
- [Glasstown Arts District](#): This riverfront arts district is located in Millville, New Jersey, which was named in the 1700s for its numerous log mills, but ultimately became known for a robust glass industry fed by the abundance of silica sand available in the area. The arts district—which, along with its local partners, has received financial support from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts—serves as a social, economic and cultural hub for the community's revitalization. The Millville Development Corporation describes it as "the physical and functional heart of our community." It is home to [Wheaton Arts](#), a multiuse cultural complex, as well as the [Museum of American Glass](#), one of the most comprehensive collections of American glass in the world. The reciprocal relationship between arts and local businesses in the district—as described in this [video](#)—has led to [economic growth](#) via business and job creation. From 2000 through 2016, the community benefited from \$30.8 million in

private investment, \$3.3 million in volunteer hours and \$19 million in public investment associated with the arts district.

- [Appel Farm Arts & Music Center](#): This is a regional art center located on 115 acres of farm land in Elmer, New Jersey, a community of about 1,400 residents in rural South Jersey. It has a robust arts education program and also facilitates opportunities for arts appreciation and creative expression. An in-depth case study of the organization, which has received support from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, documents how it contributes to the local economy by generating permanent and temporary jobs (10 for every 1,000 residents in the county), attracting cultural tourists and cultivating spending at restaurants and other businesses in the community.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of New Jersey](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)

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New Mexico Arts

- [New Mexico Fiber Arts Trails](#): A collaboration between New Mexico Arts and a grass-roots network of fiber artists, this program promotes the state's diverse cultural traditions and demonstrates the power of creative entrepreneurs to spark rural economic development. Participating trails attract visitors to communities where fiber artists live and work, encouraging cultural tourism and art sales.
- [Arts Trails Grant](#): This arts based economic development initiative of New Mexico Arts is designed to encourage cultural tourism and develop the markets of artists and artisans statewide. Grants of up to \$20,000 are available in two categories to help local communities create their own arts trail. Start-up funds support efforts to launch an arts trail, such as developing program criteria, issuing calls for applications, adjudicating applications and creating a trail map. Arts Trails Development funds support business training for artists and promotional events, among other things. [Four communities](#) have developed their own cultural trail through this program: the Ancient Way Arts Trail, the Artistic Vistas and Treasures, the Southwest New Mexico Clay Trail and the Trails & Rails Arts Trail.
- [Economic & Entrepreneurial Development Grant](#): Through this program, New Mexico Arts awards grants of up to \$15,000 for projects and partnerships supporting creative economic development in New Mexico's communities, all but three of which are considered by the state to be rural. Such efforts include arts based cultural tourism activities as well as business training and market development for artists. The program supports activities undertaken by arts organizations, tourism groups, community development foundations and individual artists.
- [Arts and Cultural Districts](#): Through this program, New Mexico Arts certifies arts and cultural districts, which can leverage the designation to spur creative economic development. Six of the seven certified districts are in rural communities, including [Gallup](#), [Mora](#) and [Silver City](#). New Mexico Arts works with the New Mexico Economic Development Department's MainStreet Program and other groups to provide technical assistance and other support to certified districts. Inspired by the partnership, New Mexico MainStreet organized two Building Creative Communities conferences, which focused on state and local efforts to "integrate commercial district revitalization, arts, tourism, and preservation." The [Great Blocks on Main Street](#) program is a complementary initiative of the state designed to spark intensive design and creative placemaking projects in key locations in cultural districts. The program provides funds and technical assistance to help communities dramatically upgrade sites that significantly contribute to public infrastructure and the creative implementation of urban design, architecture, landscape architecture and public art. In 2017, the program received a [U.S. Department of Agriculture grant](#) to fund in-depth economic development services in the rural communities of [Belen](#), [Las Vegas](#), [Raton](#) and [Tucumcari](#).

- [Creative Placemaking Grants](#): In 2016, New Mexico Arts awarded \$2,500 creative placemaking grants to two rural communities, Dixon and Mountainair. In Dixon, the Embudo Valley Library used the funds to renovate an alley as a gathering space for patrons of the library, a community center and a general store. The other grant helped the Manzano Mountain Art Council to install mosaic-covered benches and revitalize its garden with new landscaping and arts installations in order to "create gathering spaces, engage community members, and enrich the area's artistic offerings." The grants were an outgrowth of the 2015 Building Creative Communities conference, organized by New Mexico's Economic Development Department's MainStreet Program.
- [Artists to Artist: When Art Is Your Business](#): Through this initiative, New Mexico Arts is working with local arts councils to provide business training to rural artists. The first training took place in Gallup, New Mexico, and was realized in partnership with GallupARTS, the local arts council, and the Small Business Development Center at the University of New Mexico, Gallup. The majority of the 31 participating artists were Native American.
- [Temporary Installations Made for the Environment \(TIME\)](#): Through this program, New Mexico Arts partners with local communities to commission up to 10 temporary environmental artworks. These public art installations, which are mostly located in rural areas, become cultural tourism destinations and spur local economic growth.

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- [Silver City Arts and Cultural District](#): This New Mexico Arts-certified [Arts and Cultural District](#) promotes cultural entrepreneurship as a tool for economic development. Its signature event is the [Silver City Clay Festival](#), which showcases the work of local artisans and features workshops, demonstrations, a vendors' market, exhibits and more. The district also manages the [Southwest New Mexico Clay Arts Trail](#), which connects cultural tourists with artists working in the rural communities of Grant, Catron, Hidalgo and Luna Counties.
- [Zuni Pueblo, New Mexico](#): In 2015, the [Indigenous Design & Planning Institute of the University of New Mexico](#) began work to redevelop the main street of rural Zuni Pueblo, where 96% of residents are Native American. The grant enabled a series of community planning events and helped local artists, planners and leaders design a "cultural streetscape that serves as a functional and inviting marketplace." ArtPlace supported the project; learn more in its [grant announcement](#). In 2012, the Zuni became the first tribe in the nation to become a MainStreet community.
- [CIRD Workshop in Taos, New Mexico](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2010, CIRD held a workshop in Taos, New Mexico, that focused on strategies for making the downtown more pedestrian friendly. Artists, gallerists, business owners, elected officials, educators and other residents participated. Landscape architecture students from the University of New Mexico helped workshop participants resolve design problems and helped visualize ideas.

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- ★ [Building on the Past, Facing the Future: Renewing the Creative Economy of New Mexico](#) (New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, 2014)
- [Cultural Entrepreneurship: At the Crossroads of People, Place, and Prosperity](#) (Global Center for Cultural Entrepreneurship, 2010)

New York [Back to Index](#)

New York State Council on the Arts

- [Regional Economic Development Council Initiative](#): Administered by various New York agencies, including the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), this is a statewide, community focused effort to create jobs and strengthen local economies. In 2017, NYSCA offered two grants through this program. The Arts & Cultural

Initiatives Funding grant awards up to \$5 million to support arts programming as well as projects that leverage the arts to foster work-force readiness and development. The Arts & Cultural Facilities Improvement grant—which is a partnership between NYSCA and another state agency, Empire State Development—awards up to \$20 million in capital funding to promote cultural tourism, spur business development, and improve the quality, efficiency and accessibility of arts and cultural organizations.

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- [Wallkill River School of Art](#): This is a community arts center and artists' cooperative in Montgomery, New York, that has received financial support from the New York State Council on the Arts. In 2011, it began a marketing initiative focused on the work of the region's many artists and farmers by convening stakeholders at a number of public meetings and design charettes and by undertaking a study of the potential for creative economic impact. The resulting strategies—such as formalizing relationships between artists and farmers and enhancing the city-to-farm connection—were subsequently integrated into the county's economic development plan. A highlight of the initiative, which is promoted by vendors at the New York City Union Square Farmers Market, is a series of plein air art workshops on local farms. Farmers, artists, and local hotels, restaurants and other businesses have attributed revenue growth to the program, which was supported in part by a 2011 [Our Town grant](#) from the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2014, the Wallkill River School received another Our Town grant to develop its [Farm Art Trail](#), which is a partnership with the Orange County Planning Commission, Orange County Arts Council, Orange County Tourism and Cornell Cooperative Extension. The program pairs local artists with local farms across Orange County where they conduct plein air painting workshops and demonstrations. A [geocache map](#) and a mobile app enables visitors and residents to visit participating farms and engage with the artists working on them.
- [Prattville Art Center and Residency](#): Founded in 2012 in the wake of Hurricane Irene, this organization has helped lead the recovery of Prattville, New York, a small mountain town that lost 40% of its downtown buildings to the storm. The organization—which offers classes and presents exhibitions, performances and festivals—serves as a community center with a number of resources previously unavailable in the community. It has a computer lab, arranges community meals and hosts [professional social services](#). It also helps bring visitors to town through an internationally known artist residency program. The organization received an [ArtPlace grant](#) in 2013.
- [Tioga Arts & Agriculture Trail](#): This is a self-guided tour of art studios, galleries and farmland in rural Tioga County, which is the gateway to New York's Finger Lakes region. It is a program of the Tioga Arts Council, which is a New York State Council on the Arts grantee, and has become an engine for cultural tourism and related economic growth in a rural part of the state. In 2016, the program received an [Appalachian Regional Commission grant](#).
- [Wyoming County Rural Arts Initiative](#): This initiative—which is a partnership of the Wyoming County Planning & Development Department, the Arts Council for Wyoming County, the Wyoming County Industrial Development Agency and Wyoming County Chamber & Tourism—is working to strengthen cultural tourism in rural Wyoming County, New York. Through its Microenterprise Program it offered (from 2015 through 2017) grant funding to assist artists and artisans establish and enhance arts based businesses.
- [Upstate Alliance for the Creative Economy](#): This is a collaborative, cross-sector group that strengthens support for creative freelancers, creative organizations and individuals involved in creative work in upstate New York. Its work focuses on [six industry clusters](#): design, media, visual arts and handcrafted products, performing arts, heritage and preservation, and artisanal food and agriculture. The group is guided by the findings of an in-depth economic assessment, [Leveraging Regional Assets for a Vibrant Future](#). Recognizing the importance of the gig economy as part of the region's economic equation, it has initiated a Freelancers Union network. The organization, which is funded through a mixture of public (state and local) and private funds, also led efforts to develop a Creative Industries Council for the region.
- [CIRD Workshop in Akwesasne, Mohawk Territory, New York](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to

build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2016, CIRDC held a workshop for the Mohawk Nation to address how the tribe's cultural heritage could inform design standards for buildings, roadways, signage and landscapes developed on its territory bordering Canada. Workshop participants also discussed the strategies of creative placemaking. With support from Sen. Chuck Schumer (D) and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D), the tribe's Akwesasne Tourism Working Group received a \$2 million [Administration for Native Americans Grant](#) to promote tourism and spur job growth and economic development for local communities.

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- [Arts As an Industry: Their Economic Impact on New York City and New York State](#) (Alliance for the Arts, 2006)

North Carolina [Back to Index](#)

North Carolina Arts Council

- [Art Trails](#): To promote cultural tourism and related economic development, the North Carolina Arts Council (NCAC) has created three arts and culture trail programs that, together, crisscross all 100 counties of the state. NCAC publishes a guidebook for each one. The [Blue Ridge Music Trails](#) program covers 25 counties and more than 100 music venues in the rural mountains of North Carolina. It highlights the heritage of old-time and bluegrass music. The [Cherokee Heritage Trails](#) program—which celebrates Cherokee music, dance, craft and storytelling traditions—covers eight counties and the Qualla Boundary, which is a territory of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. The [African American Music Trails](#) connect tourists with the traditions of jazz, blues, gospel and funk in eight counties in the eastern part of the state. In addition, through its [Literary Trails of North Carolina](#) program, NCAC publishes a three-volume collection of work by North Carolina's writers. Organized geographically, the books enrich the experience of exploring the state as travelers can read the work of literary icons—evoking local customs and colloquialisms—as they visit the places the writers lived and wrote about. NCAC currently is developing a craft trail in the western part of the state.
- [SmART Initiative](#): This program supports the efforts of communities to leverage their arts and cultural assets to revitalize neighborhoods by strengthening sense of place, instilling local pride, attracting creative workers and cultural visitors, and sparking sustainable economic growth. The program awards grants of \$15,000-\$30,000 that enable communities to plan and implement "SmART projects" over three to five years. The process includes working with the local government, economic development groups, private developers and artists to envision and realize a community development plan. It also includes seeking additional funds from private, federal and other state sources. SmART projects have been particularly successful in small towns and rural counties. In Wilson, North Carolina, for example, more than \$25 million in private development has been invested within a two-block radius of the [Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park and Museum](#). Kinston, North Carolina, meanwhile, has raised more than \$500,000 from government and private sources, and private developers have invested more than \$30 million in the downtown corridor. In addition, NCAC worked with the municipality to create the African American Music Trails Park and is helping local partners install public art to encourage more downtown foot traffic.

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- [Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park and Museum](#): This art park and cultural center, located in Wilson, North Carolina, preserves and promotes Vollis Simpson's "whirligigs," which are large, dynamic sculptures made by an internationally known folk artist. It is a public-private partnership that includes the City of Wilson, Wilson Downtown Properties, Wilson Downtown Development Corporation and other groups. Whirligig Park, which is a big cultural tourism draw and a local engine of economic development, has become an exemplar of creative placemaking. Through a work-force training program, local residents learn how to document, repair and conserve the art pieces, which were made with recycled materials and have been exposed to the elements for nearly 30 years. The project has received financial support from the North Carolina Arts Council as well as the

National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Learn more about it in an announcement of a 2011 [Art Place grant](#) that supported the effort.

- [STARworks Center for Creative Enterprise](#): This is a project of Central Park NC, a grantee of the North Carolina Arts Council that works to grow rural economies through the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources. The STARworks Center is developing "workforce training around glass, ceramic, and metal arts; internships, apprenticeships, artists-in-residency and other work space programs; retail opportunities augmented with marketing events; and a strategy to encourage artists and creative entrepreneurs to relocate to [the rural town of] Star and join this emerging local economy." Learn more about the effort in the [announcement](#) of a 2014 ArtPlace grant supporting it.
- [The GlasStation](#): This is a hand-blown glass art studio associated with [East Carolina University's \(ECU\) School of Art and Design](#). It is located in a former gas station in Farmville, North Carolina, a small town about 15 miles away from the school's main campus. A community group, which wanted to spark arts based economic development, initiated the project. The studio is not only an ECU classroom but also a cultural tourist destination. It has public viewing areas and offers workshops to the general public. In addition, ECU is working with Pitt Community College and Pitt County Schools to make the facility available for other learning opportunities.
- [Art-Force](#): This nonprofit connects artists, artisans and designers with entrepreneurs, small businesses, educational institutions and local agencies to stimulate local economies in distressed communities. In 2012, Art-Force began work to "create alternative economic development directions in three rural North Carolina manufacturing communities: Greenville, Sanford, and Siler City." It connected artists with three small manufacturers to [conceive new products and designs](#). In [Siler City](#), it partnered two artists with a floor tile manufacturer. They helped design new products for the company, such as sculptural lighting, tabletops and wall screens. ArtPlace supported the endeavor; learn more [here](#).
- [Cultural Planning and Tourism in Mitchell and Yancey Counties](#): In 2014, the Toe River Arts Council began a cultural planning effort focused on the mountains of rural western North Carolina. The project aims to connect cultural tourists with the region's artists, studios, galleries and other cultural assets. A number of municipal governments in rural Mitchell and Yancey Counties are participating in the effort, which has received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of North Carolina](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)
- ★ [The Economic Benefits of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area](#) (Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, 2014)
- [Analysis of Traditional Music Venues in Western North Carolina](#) (Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, 2012)
- [Economic Contribution of the Creative Industry in North Carolina](#) (North Carolina Arts Council, 2009)

North Dakota [Back to Index](#)

North Dakota Council on the Arts

- [Trails and Rails](#): Through its participation in the National Park Service and Amtrak's Trails & Rails Program, the North Dakota Council on the Arts (NDCA) cultivates audiences and opportunities for local performing artists while simultaneously introducing travelers to the state's cultural and geographic diversity. The national Trails & Rails Program, which began in 2002, aims to connect Amtrak passengers to public lands and regional heritage through entertainment and education. The program operates on Amtrak trains around the country but is unique in North Dakota, where NDCA—which in 2013 received the National Park Service's first-ever National Trails & Rails Partnership Award—makes it an artist residency. NDCA books storytellers, singers, dancers, musicians, and other folk and traditional artists for performances on the Empire Builder train line. Amtrak and the National Park Service support the NDCA residency by covering the train fare, food and lodging of the performing artists. As a result of this state-federal partnership, artists meet new audiences—more than 7,000 people in 2013 alone—

while passengers, who mostly hail from other states and countries, enjoy a wide variety of North Dakota's Native American, Norwegian, Irish and other traditions.

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- [Pekin Days Art Show](#): This is an annual event of the Nelson County Arts Council (NCAC) supported by the North Dakota Council on the Arts. The juried art show—which features work by artists from North Dakota as well as Colorado, Minnesota, Montana, South Dakota, Wyoming and Canada—attracts more than 1,000 visitors to a town of fewer than 100 residents. Its large economic benefit to the community stems from art sales, booth fees and revenue generated by service industry businesses.
- [Minot Area Council of the Arts](#): This local arts council, which has received grant funding from the North Dakota Council on the Arts, is a force of creative placemaking and related economic development in Minot, North Dakota, a former oil boomtown. Through its Minot Street Art Movement program, it facilitates access to public art and encourages foot traffic in the town's downtown corridor. Its Arts in the Park program presents music performances and visual arts twice a week during the summer months. The group also initiated the feasibility study that supported the [Magic City Lofts](#) project, which is an arts anchor space developed by ArtSpace with the support of an [ArtPlace grant](#). The facility—which was the first building built in downtown Minot in 30 years—now features 34 units of affordable live/work units for artists and is home to ArtSpace Suite 1 Gallery, the Children's Music Academy and the Minot Area Arts Council's offices.
- [Jamestown Arts Park](#): In 2015, the Jamestown Fine Arts Association, a North Dakota Arts Council grantee, began the process of creating an outdoor performance space and a public art plaza in downtown Jamestown, North Dakota, a rural community of about 15,400 residents. The space is now the community's nexus of arts and culture, helping to increase foot traffic throughout the downtown core. In 2017, for example, it hosted a [two-day arts festival](#). ArtPlace has supported the project; learn more [here](#).
- [Dakota Prairie Regional Center for the Arts](#): Since it was founded in 1991, the Dakota Prairie Regional Center for the Arts (DPRCA) has transformed a block of vacant buildings in New Rockford, North Dakota, a town of about 1,400 residents, into a locus of cultural and community activity. DPRCA's historic Opera House and Old Church Theatre facilities include a coffee shop, wine bar, gift shop, and bistro. During the summer, DPRCA presents 20 to 30 productions, each of which attracts busloads of patrons. The arts center has received a number of grants from the North Dakota Arts Council.
- [Spirit Lake Sioux Reservation Arts Center](#): In 2013, the North Dakota Museum of Art and Cankdeska Cikana Community College developed a community arts center on the Spirit Lake Sioux Reservation. The arts center—featuring a gallery, artist workshops and live/work space apartments—is a cultural anchor for the local community that helps "alleviate the prevalence of alcohol abuse, crime, and depression and restore community life through the healing power of dance, music and visual arts." The Spirit Lake Sioux Reservation has a population of about 6,200 and an unemployment rate of about 47%. The project received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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- [Arts & Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of North Dakota](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)

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Ohio Arts Council

- [Fund Every County Initiative](#): Through this initiative, the Ohio Arts Council (OAC) aims to directly fund arts organizations in all 88 of Ohio's counties, 50 of which are rural. It also builds relationships with arts groups so that they will continue to apply for OAC funding and utilize its services. Before the program, OAC had never funded organizations in more than 57 counties within a single fiscal year. It met its goal of 88 counties in the

fiscal year 2016-17 grant cycle. A special appropriation allocated by the state general assembly makes the initiative possible.

- [Ohio Quilt Barn Trail](#): Initiated by the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), the Ohio Quilt Barn Trail helped catalyze the barn quilt movement spreading through rural America. Starting in 2001, the trail has grown to encompass more than 300 barns across 19 rural Ohio counties. According to a study commissioned by OAC and conducted by the Ohio University Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs—[Ohio Arts Council Quilt Barn Impact Study: Understanding the Value of the Ohio Quilt Barn Trail](#)—quilt barns have economic and social value in the Appalachian region. The study finds that the Ohio Trail attracts tourists to and creates commercial and entrepreneurial opportunities in local communities.

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- [Rural Action](#): Since 1991, this membership based nonprofit has been working in Appalachian Ohio to promote social, economic and environmental justice by training, organizing and supporting communities. Through its [Rural Action Entrepreneurial Communities](#) program, the organization helps rural communities develop and implement strategies enabling local businesses to grow and thrive. Through its [Rural Action Social Enterprise](#) program, it runs two social enterprises, Zero Waste Event Productions and the Chesterhill Produce Auction—which are "business ventures that generate profit while also creating positive environmental and social impacts"—in order to foster local economic development.
- [Pomerene Center for the Arts](#): This community arts center serves Coshocton, Ohio—a town with about 11,000 residents located in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains—through arts education, exhibitions, performances, festivals and arts based community development efforts. The organization, which has received support from the Ohio Arts Council, fosters cultural tourism in the region through its arts programming as well as its creation and management of the Coshocton County Heritage Quilt Barn Trail, which features painted quilt squares on the sides of barns that reflect local history and culture. With the support of an [Our Town grant](#) from the National Endowment for the Arts, it also redeveloped a vacant lot in town as an artPARK.
- [Riverside Art Center](#): This community art center was formed to foster economic development in Wapakoneta, a town of about 10,000 residents in rural Ohio. The center opened in 2006 after the chamber of commerce, working with the Wapakoneta Area Specialty Shops and Wapakoneta Downtown Partnership, urged a small group of local artists to facilitate arts activities that could help revitalize the community's downtown. With support from the Ohio Arts Council—described [here](#)—they rented an empty building and built the center that is thriving today.
- [Creative Placemaking Ohio](#): This project is a statewide collaboration between the Ohio CDC Association and Ohio Citizens for the Arts, supported by local partnerships with Appalachian Hills of Ohio Territory (AHOOT) and the Buckeye Hills Regional Council. It's one of three projects selected nationwide for the [Creative Placemaking Immersion Program](#), which is funded by the National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations through a National Endowment for the Arts grant. One strand of the initiative is focused on southeastern Ohio, an area of the state that is economically, geographically and ecologically considered to be part of the Appalachian region. AHOOT, which is supported by the Ohio Arts Council, hosted workshops in Zanesville, Ohio, that emphasized community development fundamentals, creative placemaking concepts, local project tours, cross-sector stereotype conversations and arts based brainstorming sessions. Zanesville was selected as a demonstration site for the region because creative placemaking concepts have been put into practice by local creatives who have rehabilitated vacant houses, industrial space and storefronts to create new studios, galleries and residential options. Another group of artists is working with a developer and the city to purchase and restore a series of historic buildings on Main Street. Many area artists are members of the Artist Colony of Zanesville, which is dedicated to "community development and economic growth" in and around downtown. Participants hope that building on an authentic sense of place will help to attract and retain residents and draw jobs, new amenities and other investment to their small town.
- [Oberlin Cultural Wayfinding](#): In 2015, City of Oberlin and the Firelands Association for the Visual Arts—an Ohio Arts Council grantee—launched a cooperative effort to implement a cultural wayfinding system for the community. The wayfinding system highlights the many arts and cultural resources in this town of about 8,300

residents and has become an asset for local cultural tourism. An Our Town creative placemaking grant from the National Endowment for the Arts helped fund the effort.

- [The Ohio State University's Certification in Creative Placemaking](#): This certification program is a partnership between the Ohio State University's City and Regional Planning program and The National Consortium for Creative Placemaking. The on-line program is taught by creative placemaking experts. Students develop skills in community development, economic development, leadership development, site planning and cultural tourism.

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- [The Economic Impact of Ohio's Creative Industries: 2015](#) (Center for Regional Development, 2015)

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Oklahoma Arts Council

- [Cultural District Initiative](#): Through this program, the Oklahoma Arts Council (OAC) helps rural and urban communities identify and leverage their arts and cultural assets to promote economic development. Certified districts can leverage the designation to increase cultural tourism and seek funding from other sources. OAC provides professional consultations, other guidance and grants to communities seeking certification. Up to \$7,500 per year (up to a total of \$25,000 over five years) in grant funding is available per community. Currently, two of OAC's certified districts are in a rural area. The [Muskogee Cultural District](#) is home to a number of arts and cultural venues including the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame, Three Rivers Museum, Muskogee Civic Center and the Roxy Theatre. The [Enid Cultural District](#) has successfully leveraged the arts as a significant part of its downtown economic development strategy. The community now features a renovated 5,000-seat arena and convention center, an active event calendar, public art, shopping and dining, and working artists.
- [Rural Action Partnership Program](#): The Rural Action Partnership Program is a legislatively established initiative of the Oklahoma Department of Commerce that connects economic development resources to Oklahoma's rural residents. The Oklahoma Arts Council attends the quarterly meetings of the Rural Action Partnership Program as an active participant in the effort.
- [Oklahoma Main Street](#): The Oklahoma Arts Council (OAC) works strategically with the Oklahoma Main Street (OMS) program to expand creative business opportunities in small towns across the state. OMS, for example, serves on the advisory team for OAC's [Cultural District Initiative](#). OAC, meanwhile, is part of OMS's annual awards selection committee. OMS's work combining historic preservation and downtown revitalization efforts with economic stimulation goes hand in hand with the goals of OAC's Cultural District Initiative. Several Main Street communities receive a grant from OAC's Cultural District Initiative, and two of OAC's certified cultural districts are managed by local Main Street programs. In addition, OMS was selected by the National Main Street Center to host a placemaking training workshop that included OAC's participation.

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- [Durant, Oklahoma](#): In 2016, the City of Durant and a number of local partners—including the Oklahoma Shakespearean Festival, the Choctaw Nation and the local chamber of commerce—began collaborating to develop a master community plan and design an arts district. The goal is to leverage the arts to revitalize downtown Durant, a rural community, and communities in the Choctaw Nation, which has been a federally designated [Promise Zone](#) since 2014. The effort also is trying to foster greater commercial interconnections between Durant and the Choctaw Nation Resort. The National Endowment for the Arts supported the project through an Our Town grant; learn more from its [funding announcement](#).
- [Creative Communities Project](#): This is a creative leadership capacity-building project of Creative Oklahoma, which is a network for innovators, entrepreneurs, schools, businesses and communities interested in driving economic growth through creativity. It aims to help local communities generate feasible ideas for sustainable economic and community development. Of the eight towns that participated in the project in 2016, four—Guthrie, Locust Grove, Okmulgee and Tahlequah—are small and/or rural communities. Participating towns

receive asset-mapping assistance, advice from design-thinking experts, and access to creativity and innovation practitioners. The project also supports events that connect students and educators with innovation trainers, leaders and mentors from the business community.

- [Guthrie, Oklahoma](#): This community of about 10,000 residents on the rural edges of Oklahoma City has developed a reputation as an arts community. Its vibrant cultural activity, according to a 2017 study, is a significant economic driver. In 2015, Guthrie's arts and culture sector generated \$3.9 million in total economic activity, including \$2.3 million in event related spending by arts audiences. It also supported 79 FTE jobs, generated \$1.6 million in household income and delivered \$338,000 in local and state tax revenue.
- [All Fired Up Gallery and Art Center](#): Located in Guymon, Oklahoma, a town of about 11,000 residents, this art center is committed to developing "a new economy and culture based on art which includes the students at Oklahoma Panhandle State University and other local artists." The center has gallery space, workshops and an artist incubation program.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Oklahoma](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)

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Oregon Arts Commission

- [Arts Build Communities Grant](#): Through this program, the Oregon Arts Commission awards grants of \$3,000-\$7,000 to encourage involvement of the arts and artists in community development and cultural tourism. The program prioritizes underserved communities in Oregon, including those in rural parts of the state. Among recent projects funded by this program are an effort to leverage public art to improve a streetscape and reinforce community collaboration; a convening of Oregon's young slam poets from diverse rural and urban backgrounds; and a public performance and exhibit designed to facilitate a community discussion about homelessness and housing insecurity in the Columbia Gorge.
- [Rural Opportunity Initiative](#): This program of Business Oregon—the state's economic development agency, which contains the Oregon Arts Commission—aims to unify and strengthen business development resources for the state's rural regions. Through capacity building grants of \$5,000-\$100,000, it supports activities of entrepreneurs and small businesses in effort to promote entrepreneurship based economic development.
- [Oregon Cultural Trust](#): A sister agency of the Oregon Arts Commission, the Oregon Cultural Trust was established 14 years ago by the Oregon legislature as an ongoing public-private funding partnership for arts and culture across the state. Its motto is "98,000 Square Miles of YES." In collaboration with Oregon's federally recognized [county and tribal Cultural Coalitions](#), the trust promotes the arts and makes strategic investments in arts and heritage projects statewide. According to a 2012 [study](#) it commissioned, cultural heritage travelers in Oregon spent nearly 60% more than the national average. Furthermore, cultural heritage activities played a greater role in the choice of travel destinations in Oregon than elsewhere in the United States. This information has informed tourism development efforts in numerous rural Oregon counties as well as Travel Oregon's Rural Tourism Studio.
- [Technical Assistance in Support of Arts & Economic Prosperity Study 5: The Oregon Arts Commission \(OAC\)](#) supported the research in Oregon behind the [Arts & Economic Prosperity 5](#) study of Americans for the Arts (AFTA). For example, OAC helped organize 11 regions in the state for the project. In addition, following AFTA's release of Oregon's creative economy data, OAC facilitated seven convenings of elected, business and community leaders to help them better understand the findings.

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- [Rural Tourism Studio](#): This is Travel Oregon's training program designed to help rural communities develop and offer high-value, authentic experiences to travelers. The program aims to strengthen Oregon as a premier

destination while also stimulating local economies, protecting and enhancing local resources, and fostering community pride. One of its training modules is focused on developing cultural heritage tourism. Communities that participate in the program—which send a team of community leaders, tourism entrepreneurs, hospitality professionals, outdoor recreation enthusiasts, restaurateurs and other stakeholders to a series of workshops—are eligible to apply for a \$20,000 grant from Travel Oregon to implement a tourism project.

- [Talent Maker City](#): This nonprofit group works to establish rural Talent, Oregon, "as a regional hub for cultural and economic innovation." In particular, it is developing a maker space facility to foster "creative energy" and creative entrepreneurship in the community. It also offers STEAM workshops and programs for people of all ages.
- [Talk Play Dream: Hablar Jugar Soñar](#): In 2015, the City of Milton-Freewater, Oregon—a town of about 7,000 residents with a large Latino population—received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for a series of bilingual cultural events designed to enliven the community and connect disparate populations. The initiative—Talk Play Dream: Hablar Jugar Soñar—engaged residents in cultural asset mapping, workshops, performances, festivals and other creative events.
- [Newberg Cultural District](#): In 2013, the City of Newberg, Oregon, partnered with the Chehalem Park and Recreation District, Newberg Public Library and Chehalem Cultural Center—which is an Oregon Arts Commission grantee—to create this local cultural district to encourage cultural tourism and creative economic development in a city of about 22,000 residents. The anchor institution of the district is the [Chehalem Cultural Center](#), which offers an array of arts classes, hosts arts exhibitions and presents theatre performances. Its facilities include a ceramics studio and a recording studio. An [Our Town grant](#) from the National Endowment for the Arts supported the development of the community's cultural district master plan.
- [The Confluence Project](#): This nonprofit group facilitates creative placemaking and cultural tourism through its mission to connect "people to place through art and education." In collaboration with regional Native American tribes, local communities and the artist Maya Lin, it is installing six public art works at locations along 438 miles of the Columbia River in effort to celebrate spaces of cultural and ecological significance. These art installations—and associated education and community-engagement programs—are intended to share stories of the river and the lives it has fed and shaped over the centuries. The National Endowment of the Arts supported the project through a 2012 Our Town grant; learn more from its [funding announcement](#).
- [Advance Astoria](#): The City of Astoria, Oregon, a rural town of about 9,800 residents, began a five-year economic development initiative in 2017. Advance Astoria is a comprehensive plan that includes among its strategies an emphasis on creative placemaking and a specific action item to strengthen the community's arts and cultural assets by addressing their marketing, space and networking needs. The plan's development included an assessment of "[target industries](#)" ripe for development, such as artisanal foods, cottage industries and crafts. The city is promoting itself as a destination for cultural tourism and locally sourced shopping. Cultural organizations are aligning themselves with the effort. For instance, the new tagline for the Astoria Visual Arts guild is, "Placing arts and culture at the center of a changing rural economy."
- [Grants Pass, Oregon](#): The City of Grants Pass, located in rural southern Oregon, has a robust creative economic development initiative. Its promotional campaign identifies local artisans and restaurants and businesses that locally source their products. It supports two outdoor crafts and farmers markets. Through its MakerSpaces project it manages collaborative work spaces—including commercial kitchens—equipped with tools for creative entrepreneurs, while its Tool Library lets residents borrow equipment and offers workshops on how to use it. Finally, the city is partnering with Rogue Community College, which has received funding from the Oregon Arts Commission, to develop the [Rogue Innovation Hub](#). This will be a regional creative maker space and creative entrepreneurship hub located in the downtown corridor.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Oregon](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)
- [Heritage Attracts Travelers Who Spend Money in Oregon Communities](#) (Oregon Heritage Commission, 2012)
- [Creative Vitality in Oregon](#) (Oregon Arts Commission, 2010)

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Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

- [Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts \(PPA\)](#): This decentralized grant program is a partnership between the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA) and 13 local arts organizations through which PCA is able to award funds to arts organizations serving all 67 counties in Pennsylvania. The program is designed to support a wide variety of community arts development activities, especially in rural and low-income communities that may have been historically underserved by state arts funding. The structure of the program empowers local decision making in accordance with community needs and priorities—PPA partner entities can access formula funds that they regrant to cultural and civic groups to pursue locally relevant projects. This program also invests in the capacity of partner organizations as hubs for community arts development. Examples of partners with a rural service emphasis include:
 - The [Pennsylvania Rural Arts Alliance](#) is a designated PPA partner serving southwestern Pennsylvania. In addition to administering PCA funds, it runs a special [grant program](#) that uses the arts and culture to address community health issues, which pose a significant challenge for many rural communities.
 - The [Elk County Council on the Arts](#) (ECCOTA) is the designated PPA partner for a rural region in northwestern Pennsylvania. In addition to managing PPA grants, ECCOTA works with the Pennsylvania Wilds Artisan Development Work Group to develop and promote the [Wilds Cooperative of Pennsylvania](#) (WCP). This program, sanctioned by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, features a culture and recreation trail spanning 13 counties and works to develop tourism that increases the exposure of artisans in the rural Pennsylvania Wilds region. Since March 2014 ECCOTA has served as the administrative support for WCP, running communications, member billing and customer support for more than 80 artisans and 50 trail sites. The aim of WCP is to benefit local economies by helping creative makers and businesses to network, learn from each other and bring to market products that reflect the region's natural beauty, bounty and rural traditions. The organization supports participating artists, organizations and communities through networking, marketing support and [branding guidelines](#). WCP also promotes the Pennsylvania Wilds brand through its [Signage Grant Program](#), which awards up to \$500 to help businesses and nonprofit groups attract customers.

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- [Artist Relocation Program, Oil City, Pennsylvania](#): The municipal government of Oil City, Pennsylvania—a community of about 11,000 residents—is encouraging working artists to relocate to the community. To that end, the municipality, which has received past grant funding from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, is marketing the town and its resources. The town boasts a wealth of affordable studio space and housing as well as its proximity to the arts resources of Cleveland, Ohio, Buffalo, New York, and Erie and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In addition, it is offering financial incentives to relocating artists. Residential incentives include 100% financing on the purchase of residential live-work space, grants to cover down payments and closing costs, and zoning rules that enable artists to establish a retail art gallery in their home. Commercial incentives include a \$250 grant and low-interest \$5,000 loan for facade improvements, grants for any exterior improvements, grants for murals in the downtown business district, and loans and tax abatement for property rehabilitation.
- [Bridging the Gap: Public Art Project](#): With the goal of leveraging creative placemaking to foster community and economic vibrancy, the Westmoreland Museum of American Art and the City of Greensburg, Pennsylvania, collaborated on a public art project that revitalized a bridge connecting the museum to the downtown business corridor. The goal of the project was to create an "inviting gateway" drawing museum visitors to the business district and drawing residents of Greensburg, a city of about 15,000 people, to the museum. The project received financial support from a National Endowment for the Arts [Our Town grant](#) as well as from The Heinz Endowments, Westmoreland County Tourism Grant Program, Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area and several local foundations.

- [Public Art Plan for Conneaut Lake](#): In 2014, Conneaut Lake, Pennsylvania—a community of fewer than 1,000 residents—received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to develop a public art trail and install public artwork in the town's commercial corridor. A number of stakeholders, including artists, storytellers, ethnographers and local residents, contributed to the process of developing the underlying public art plan with the goals of community revitalization and economic growth.
- [ArtFest](#): This is an annual "art party" organized by Downtown Bloomsburg, Inc., a group that promotes the economic vitality, architectural heritage and cultural vibrancy of the commercial district of Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, a rural town with about 14,500 residents. The festival features live music and showcases regional artists, who can market and sell their work directly to the public from a series of outdoor booths. ArtFest has received financial support from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.
- [Art Blast](#): This is an annual arts and crafts festival that takes place in Greensboro, Pennsylvania, a rural community of less than 300 residents. The festival, which is an opportunity for local arts-entrepreneurs to sell their wares, is organized by the Nathanael Greene Community Development Corporation. It has received support from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Greene County Tourism Promotion Agency and Community Foundation of Greene County.

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Rhode Island State Council on the Arts

- [Assets for Artists](#): With financial support from the U.S Department of Agriculture and the New England Foundation for the Arts, the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts has been able to offer Assets for Artists—a program of the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA)—to artists hailing from Rhode Island's rural communities. The program helps develop participating artists' financial and business acumen through workshops and personal trainings. Training topics include money management, business planning, legal issues and arts marketing. The program also encourages artists to develop their financial assets by offering matching grants of \$1,000 (\$2,000 for artists meeting low-income eligibility criteria).
- [Artists Open Studios Tour](#): Through this program the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts helps local artists gain public exposure, develop their audience and sell their work. It awards grants of \$750 to artists facilitating tours of artists' studios, which foster cultural vibrancy and, as a result, are an effective strategy for creative placemaking and economic development. Grant funds may cover expenses related to promoting and managing an open studios event.
- [Statewide Sales Tax Exemption on Sales of Artwork](#): In 2013, the Rhode Island legislature and governor enacted a sales tax exemption for artwork sold anywhere in the state, effectively expanding statewide the cultural district certification program of the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts. The goal of the tax exemption is to increase cultural tourism and creative economic development throughout the state, including its rural communities.

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- [Economic Development and the Arts in Rhode Island](#) (Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, 2013)

South Carolina [Back to Index](#)

South Carolina Arts Commission

- [The Art of Community: Rural SC](#): Through this pilot program, the South Carolina Arts Commission (SCAC) is advancing rural development through the arts, culture and creative placemaking. With financial support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency, the program facilitates community-led planning and projects in six rural, underserved counties designated as a [Promise Zone](#) by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The teams undertaking the projects each consist of seven local residents with

deep knowledge of their community's assets and challenges as well as the skills, vision and capacity to address them. Each team is led by an SCAC liaison, known as a "maven," who recruits the other participating stakeholders. SCAC is providing a broad support network through an advisory committee consisting of 23 national and state leaders, including experts from organizations such as ArtPlace America, Art of the Rural, Rural LISC, The National Consortium for Creative Placemaking, South Arts and the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission. The initiative has produced several videos highlighting its impact, which can be accessed [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#). In October 2017, it received a [Power of Rural award](#) the South Carolina Office of Rural Health at the 21st annual Rural Health Conference.

- [ArtsGrow SC](#): Through this program, the South Carolina Arts Commission (SCAC) and CommunityWorks—a local community development group that strengthens the financial infrastructure of underserved areas—are offering a savings incentive program, grants, loans and personalized financial consultations. SCAC and CommunityWorks are establishing savings accounts for participating artists in rural Spartanburg County—home to one of the state's seven [certified cultural districts](#)—and matching their deposits at a rate of three to one. To be eligible for an "individual development account," artists must attend two professional development workshops, commit to an annual savings target and file related quarterly progress reports. The program's goal is to help artists leverage their savings so they can start or expand an arts related business, purchase equipment or otherwise invest in their creative career. Artists who receive an individual development account qualify to receive one-on-one coaching from SCAC staff and may apply for an SCAC quarterly grant to cover the costs of business training. Artists also may apply to CommunityWorks for a business loan of up to \$15,000. SCAC began this effort to support cultural entrepreneurship after recognizing the scarcity of investment capital available in South Carolina for motivated artists and creative ventures.
- [Artists' Ventures Initiative](#): This initiative is dedicated to improving conditions for South Carolina artists by helping them develop the knowledge and skills to build satisfying, sustainable careers. Through it, the South Carolina Arts Commission (SCAC) has partnered with Artists U—a Philadelphia based professional development program run by and for artists—to offer [Entrepreneurial Training for Artists](#). SCAC also offers [Artists' Ventures Initiative Grants](#) to "encourage and enable the creation of new artist-driven, arts based business ventures that will provide career satisfaction and sustainability for S.C. artists." Up to \$3,500 is available for one-time projects, and \$5,000 for ongoing business ventures. Grantees become part of SCAC's "virtual business incubator," which connects them several times a year with the initiative's advisory committee for advice and support. Grantees also have ongoing, as-needed access to the advisory committee. SCAC's Artists' Ventures Initiative was launched with initial funding from [Leveraging Investments in Creativity](#) (LINC).
- [Cultural Districts Program](#): Through this program, the South Carolina Arts Commission (SCAC) officially recognizes local cultural districts through a certification process. Certified districts are to leverage their designation to increase cultural tourism and otherwise encourage creative economic development. SCAC requires each one to report annually about tourism, employment, arts entrepreneurship, sales tax revenue and other metrics of the creative economy. Several of the certified districts are in a rural community, including the [Lancaster Cultural District](#), the [Beaufort Cultural District](#) and the [Bluffton Cultural District](#).

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- [Colleton Museum & Farmers Market and Commercial Kitchen](#): The Colleton Museum & Farmers Market—which is located in downtown Walterboro, a town of about 5,500 residents in South Carolina's Lowcountry—preserves and promotes the historical, natural, artistic, cultural and agricultural heritage of rural Colleton County. The institution's facility is multipurpose, featuring museum galleries as well as space for a farmers' market, the Colleton Commercial Kitchen and a retail outlet selling artisanal food and locally sourced books, art and heritage crafts. With nearly 20,000 visitors each year, the organization has become a regional hub of social, creative and economic opportunities. In particular, the commercial kitchen, which opened in 2015, supports food based entrepreneurship such as farm-to-table business ventures, restaurant start-ups and artisanal bakeries. Since it opened, the kitchen has helped create 50 jobs. Walterboro—via the Colleton Museum & Farmers Market—is one of six rural communities participating in the South Carolina Arts Commission's [The Art of Community: Rural SC](#), which, with financial support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency, is

facilitating community-led creative placemaking projects. The institution also has participated as a local partner in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [Local Foods, Local Places initiative](#), through which it explored strategies to leverage its farmers market and commercial kitchen to help revitalize downtown Walterboro as a local food and arts destination.

- [Catawba Cultural Center](#): The mission of the Catawba Cultural Center—located in the small city of Rock Hill, South Carolina—is to preserve, protect, promote and maintain the rich cultural heritage of the Catawba Indian Nation through efforts in archives, archeology, tribal historic preservation, native crafts, cultural education, and tourism development." In addition to maintaining exhibition space, the cultural center hosts festivals associated with the Catawba Nation and has a retail store selling the work of native artisans. In 2015, the Catawba Indian Nation received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for a project designed to foster the artistic and entrepreneurial capacity of tribal artists.
- [Pendleton Town Square](#): The Town of Pendleton, South Carolina, worked with a community theatre and five other local organizations to renovate the town square of this rural community with a population of about 3,000 residents. The effort was based on ideas community members expressed during a 2011 workshop of The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD)—which is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." The project, which in 2012 received an Our Town grant from the NEA, aimed to increase the vibrancy of Pendleton's downtown corridor and associated cultural tourism and economic development.
- [ArtFields](#): This is an annual art competition and festival in Lake City, a community of fewer than 7,000 residents in rural South Carolina. The competition, which awards \$120,000 in prizes, is open only to artists from 12 southern states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. Artists accepted into the competition show their work during the nine-day festival in nontraditional exhibition spaces, such as a barbershop, in order to create "unforgettable experiences" for festival attendees. Winners are selected by popular choice and a juried panel. Since the event began in 2013, it has become a major cultural tourism draw and an engine for creative economic development.

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- [South Carolina's Creative Cluster: A Catalyst for Economic Development](#) (South Carolina Arts Commission, 2011)

South Dakota [Back to Index](#)

South Dakota Arts Council

- [A Rural Tourism Focus](#): In order to leverage the intersections between the arts and tourism—and to take advantage of a hotel/motel bed tax that funds the arts—the South Dakota Arts Council (SDAC) is located within the South Dakota Department of Tourism, which actively [promotes arts and culture](#) offerings and opportunities in the state as part of its marketing strategy. In addition, SDAC has geared its [individual and organizational grant programs](#) and [Touring Arts program](#) to reach small communities throughout this predominately rural state. Likewise, SDAC supports rural nonprofit arts organizations through its partnership with [ArtsLab](#), a capacity building and board development program of Arts Midwest based on peer learning and technical assistance.
- [Regional Arts Meetings](#): In 2017 the South Dakota Arts Council and Arts South Dakota convened nine regional forums to discuss arts based community development and identify ways that the state could assist communities with local priorities, including creative economic development. Eight of these meetings took place in a rural community. Among the topics meeting participants addressed were arts districts, cultural tourism, market development, professional development, work-force development, creative economy data, branding small towns, and affordable housing and health care.

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- [Rolling Rez Arts](#): This is a mobile artist studio, classroom, bank and marketplace that travels across the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota—which is more than three times the size of Rhode Island—in support of Native American artists. The bus brings a host of creative-career resources to arts entrepreneurs who otherwise might not have access to them, such as business workshops, digital equipment, design and film-editing software, and a safe. Through "buying days," the program connects artists and their work to markets that would otherwise be inaccessible to them because of geographical distance, lack of transportation and other reasons. The program is supported by First Peoples Fund, The Bush Foundation, ArtPlace America and the National Endowment for the Arts, among other groups.
- [Oglala Lakota Arts and Business Incubator](#): The Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, which is a federally designated [Promise Zone](#), is developing the Oglala Lakota Arts and Business Incubator in order to create jobs for entrepreneurial artists and artisans and opportunities for creative small businesses. The incubator will host five Native American enterprises and two anchor businesses. It also will offer business training to artists and artisans, including those who don't have space in the facility. The project received financial support in 2015 from the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce and, in 2017, from the National Endowment for the Arts.
- [Dakota Rising](#): This is an initiative of [Dakota Resources](#), an organization based in Renner, South Dakota, that supports "entrepreneur and business development, rural housing development, community and leadership development and financial development." Dakota Rising fosters entrepreneurship in South Dakota through a free two-year program that provides tools, resources and connections to help participants achieve their goals and, ultimately, contribute to rural economic and community development. Numerous graduates of the program have [specialized in creative businesses](#) such as design, artisan foods, handcrafts, custom textiles and publishing.
- [The Matthews Opera House](#): The Matthews Opera House—a grantee of the South Dakota Arts Council—has become a nexus of cultural activity and related economic development in rural Spearfish, South Dakota, which is a town of about 10,500 residents. In 2016, The Matthews received a [Community Innovation grant](#) from the Bush Foundation for its [ArtCentral project](#), which is "a community collaboration to centralize the arts as an integrated asset for inclusivity, economic development, and sustained outreach in the Spearfish area." The project is uniting artists, arts advocates and other community stakeholders in a two-year effort "to create a new model for arts planning and outreach, focusing on the themes of belonging, inclusion, equity, rural connectedness, cultivating creativity, imagining space, and the arts as a community development catalyst."
- [The Heritage Center at Red Cloud Indian School](#): This cultural center and art gallery in Pine Ridge, South Dakota, shares the "heritage of North America's Native community and the skill and creativity that remain mainstays of the local Lakota and other Native American cultures." The center, which is a South Dakota Arts Council grantee, considers itself to be "an economic engine on the Pine Ridge Reservation," which has a history of severe unemployment (up to an 80% unemployment rate). In particular, the center's gift shop and on-line store enables local artists to become arts entrepreneurs. ArtPlace awarded a grant to the Heritage Center in 2013; [learn more here](#).
- [Freeman Arts Earth Center](#): In 2014, the City of Freeman, South Dakota—a town of about 1,300 residents—received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to support a planning process for the development of the Freeman Arts Earth Center. The municipal government and its project partners—including the University of Arkansas Community Design Center, Center for Architectural and Rural Sustainability, and Partners with Freeman Academy—envision the cultural center as a "model for rural communities seeking innovative approaches to restoring economic and cultural vitality." When completed, the 16,000 square-foot structure will be a cultural tourism draw with a theatre, recital hall, and arts and agriculture based programming.
- [South Dakota Sculpture Trail](#): This is a self-directed driving tour of South Dakota that positions itself as a "free public art museum that stretches across the entire state with hundreds of world class sculptures to enjoy." It is a mechanism of cultural tourism and related economic development. A number of rural communities benefit from it. The South Dakota Arts Council supports most of the nonprofits affiliated with the program.

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- [Establishing a Creative Economy: Art as an Economic Engine in Native Communities](#) (First Peoples Fund, Artspace, Colorado State University, LINC, Northwest Area Foundation, 2013)

Tennessee [Back to Index](#)

Tennessee Arts Commission

- [Creative Placemaking Grants](#): Through this program, the Tennessee Arts Commission awards grants of \$5,000-\$8,000 to projects that leverage arts or cultural assets for economic and community development. (Applications for projects involving two or more communities may request up to \$10,000.) Grants support projects that leverage the arts to revitalize neighborhoods; that develop an arts or cultural business incubator or apprenticeship program; that encourage integration of the arts into state parks, farmers markets or other natural or recreational assets; or that transform a community liability into a community asset. According to the program's guidelines, every year at least two awards will be made to eligible rural applicants.
- [Arts Build Communities](#): This program awards grants of \$500-\$2,500 to government agencies as well as to small, emerging and/or volunteer-driven organizations that fund efforts to leverage the arts to "enhance a community's identity and/or economic development" or to "offer training that helps experienced or emerging artists/arts administrators develop entrepreneurial skills or innovative strategies for building sustainability," among other things. The Tennessee Arts Commission facilitates the program through 13 local and regional partners, 11 of which serve some rural counties and about half of which primarily serve rural areas. Of the 167 grants the program awarded in fiscal year 2017, 39% of them funded community and/or economic development and 15% supported arts entrepreneurship training.
- [Targeted Arts Development Initiative](#): This program awards grants of up to \$5,000 in effort to help stakeholders in underserved counties build capacity, leverage the arts to overcome community challenges, strengthen existing assets or otherwise benefit citizens. It also is a mechanism that enables the Tennessee Arts Commission (TAC) to help these communities access its other grant programs and services. According to TAC staff, the program has been key to investing funds in every county of the state for the last four years. The program is only open to applicants from counties TAC designates, which TAC does biannually relative to a review of the impact of its grant portfolio.
- [Rural Arts Project Support](#): This program awards grants that support arts projects in rural counties. Non-arts organizations may receive \$500-\$7,000. Arts organizations may receive \$500-\$9,000, and those serving a statewide audience may seek up to \$10,000.
- [Governor's Rural Task Force](#): Governor Bill Haslam (R) created the Rural Task Force to harness local, state and federal resources and partnerships to strengthen the infrastructure and assets of rural communities, including those related to education, health, entrepreneurship, the work force and the economy. The Tennessee Arts Commission (TAC) contributed to the effort by helping to develop the group's placemaking recommendations for its [final report](#). One recommendation is for the development of a program—which would be managed by the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development with assistance from TAC and other state agencies—that helps rural communities identify, expand and market their cultural and recreational assets in effort to foster sustainable economic development.
- [Interagency Consulting](#): The Tennessee Arts Commission is meeting with the Assistant Commissioner of Rural Development of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development to discuss informally how to better leverage state resources in rural and distressed communities. The discussions have touched on the role of the arts in fostering rural creative economic development.

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- [Center for Rural Strategies](#): This nonprofit group, based both in Whitesburg, Kentucky, and Knoxville, Tennessee, works to improve the economic and social conditions of rural communities "through the creative and innovative

use of media and communications." Its activities include "building coalitions, developing partnerships, leading public information campaigns, and advancing strategies that strengthen connections between rural and urban places." It publishes [The Daily Yonder](#), a digital news platform that often highlights examples of rural creative economic development projects. It also manages the [National Rural Assembly](#), a coalition of more than 400 organizations and individuals from 47 states working to support opportunities and improve policies for rural communities in America. The coalition has a [Rural Arts & Culture Working Group](#) that has, through convenings and on-line interactions, addressed creative economic development among other topics pertinent to rural communities.

- [National Storytelling Festival](#): This festival, now in its 46th year, is a program of the International Storytelling Center, which is a grantee of the Tennessee Arts Commission. It is held on the first Friday of every October in a number of circus tents in downtown Jonesborough, Tennessee, a town of about 6,000 residents. It is a major cultural tourism attraction for the community.
- [Delta Creative Placemaking Initiative](#): This is a pilot project of the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) designed to help local communities and their economic development groups to connect more deeply with the arts and culture sector of the Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions in order to generate creative economic development. Through the effort, DRA is awarding grants to help small communities integrate arts and culture activities into their economic and community development strategies. Participating communities also are undertaking efforts to promote their arts and culture assets to encourage cultural tourism. In October 2017, the initiative awarded grants to two rural Tennessee communities. Brownsville received \$15,000 to highlight its most popular tourism attraction—a very large art installation called "[The Mindfield](#)"—through the design of wayfinding signage created by local artists and welding students. Martin received \$22,000 to work with artists to design an "outdoor classroom" and install a soundscape recreational area and complementary playground, among other things, to help attract visitors to town.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Tennessee](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)

Texas [Back to Index](#)

Texas Commission on the Arts

- [Cultural Districts](#): Through this program, the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) certifies local cultural districts, which, in turn, leverage the designation to encourage cultural tourism, creative placemaking and related economic development. TCA further supports certified cultural districts through its [Cultural District Project Grants](#) program. It awards grants of \$3,000-\$250,000 to fund projects that improve cultural districts and/or increase their impact. Projects may focus on signage, promotional activities, infrastructure improvements, administrative support and arts programming. Five of TCA's certified districts are in a rural county, including the [Rockport Cultural Arts District](#) and [Winnsboro Cultural District](#). The Alpine Cultural District, also rural, features a number of cultural tourism events, including the Clayworks Ceramics Show, the Viva Big Bend Music Festival, the Big Bend Ranch Rodeo and Artwalk. In addition, it is home to the [Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering](#), which is a two-day event celebrating the oral tradition of the working cowboy featuring poetry, stories and music and attracting an audience of 2,000.
- [Rural Gathering](#): In December 2016, The Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) gathered representatives from 19 rural communities to discuss challenges, resources and opportunities for those in counties with populations of fewer than 50,000. The meeting was held at the Round Top Festival Institute and funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Speakers included a representative from U.S. Department of Agricultural Rural Development and the Texas Cultural Trust. A primary outcome of the gathering was the development of the [Texas Rural Arts Facebook Group](#). (See page 2 of TCA's [December 2016 newsletter](#) for more information.)

- [Rural Initiatives](#): Through this program, the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) helps rural communities lacking arts organizations and assets to apply for its [Arts Respond Project Grant](#) program by designating government agencies and nonprofits as Rural Arts Providers and thereby recognizing them as eligible grant applicants. Non-arts entities that may earn the status of Rural Arts Provider include chambers of commerce, Main Street programs, libraries, schools, parks and recreation departments, and other departments of municipal, county, state or federal government.
- [Rural Performance Tour](#): Twice each fiscal year, the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) identifies rural counties that have received little or no TCA funding in the past several years for inclusion in its spring and summer Rural Performance Tour program. Through the program, TCA provides presenters in the (up to 24) designated counties with a free performance by a member of TCA's [Texas Touring Roster](#). Participating roster artists each tour through six counties and receive an all-inclusive fee of \$3,000 from TCA. TCA helps the artists connect with potential venues in the communities they visit. The goal of the program is not only to bring arts events to communities with few cultural resources but also to encourage these communities to seek future support from TCA.

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- [Marfa Drive-In](#): Ballroom Marfa, a contemporary arts space located in a former dance hall, is developing this outdoor arts venue designed to be a cultural tourism destination in Marfa, a town of fewer than 2,000 people in the high desert of West Texas. While the town has a small population, it long has been an international destination for artists, arts patrons and other arts stakeholders who come to see the Minimalist art collection at the [Chinati Foundation](#). Ballroom Marfa, a Texas Commission on the Arts grantee, worked with the municipal government of Presidio County to develop the project. The National Endowment for the Arts, which supported it through an Our Town grant, has a [detailed description](#) of the project.
- [Lost Pines Art Center](#): The Bastrop Fine Arts Guild, which has received past grant support from the Texas Commission on the Arts, built this art center in a 100-year-old cotton seed mill in effort to revitalize "a dead zone" between the downtown of Bastrop, Texas, and its new convention center." The art center—which features gallery, classroom and studio space as well as a sculpture garden—is now a cultural anchor in Bastrop, a community of about 7,000 residents. Its programming includes art classes, an arts league and a store where member artists can sell their work. ArtPlace helped support the effort and produced a [summary](#) of it.
- [CIRD Workshop in Mart, Texas](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2011, CIRD held a workshop in Mart, Texas, which is a town of about 2,400 residents, to discuss the intersections between community arts, community development and planning. Specifically, it addressed the future of the town's central business district relative to streetscape design, historic building preservation and tourism. It also focused on the creative revitalization of vacant lots and an abandoned high school football field.

Texas Creative Economy Studies [Back to Index](#)

- ★ [State of the Arts Report 2017](#) (Texas Cultural Trust, 2017)
- [The Art of Ensuring a Bright Future for Texas: State of the Arts Report](#) (Texas Cultural Trust, 2015)

Utah [Back to Index](#)

Utah Division of Arts & Museums

- [Utah Arts and Culture Business Alliance](#): Created by state [legislation](#) enacted in 2015, this is an advisory committee to the Utah Division of Arts & Museums tasked with advocating for "economic development where business intersects with the arts." The bill also created the Arts and Culture Business Alliance Account to fund the committee's work, which has so far included awarding \$75,000 in grants. (The legislature has not

replenished the account since 2015, so the alliance is no longer awarding grants.) The Division of Arts & Museums has consulted with the alliance and the Governor's Office of Economic Development about cultural tourism. The conversation led to the Division working with the Economic Development Corporation of Utah to collect data about Utah's cultural industry in effort to attract businesses to the state.

- **Interagency Collaboration**: The Utah Division of Arts & Museums is working with other state agencies to create an initiative supporting arts based development in small, rural communities. It anticipates launching the effort in July 2018. The effort is an outgrowth of Governor Gary Herbert's (R) Success Plus initiative, which is focused on job growth and economic development in rural communities.
- **Creative Communities Initiative**: Through this program, the Utah Division of Arts & Museums awards grants to support "innovative connections between culture, art, community building, civic engagement, community planning and use of public space for enhancement of economic opportunities and quality of life." The grants are designed to catalyze "innovative community partnerships and civic dialogue on creative economic development." The program also trains project leaders how to facilitate civic dialogue and leverage community support, so that after their project's completion they can continue to support their communities in other capacities. Though the program is currently on hiatus because of lack of state funding, the Division of Arts & Museums is creating an associated community vitality index.
- **Governor's Office of Economic Development**: The Governor's Office of Economic Development administers several rural development programs that integrate the arts and culture. For example, performing arts and entertainment businesses are eligible for [Rural Fast Track](#) employment grants. This program awards \$1,000-\$1,500 per each new FTE job created (the exact award amount depends on the job's wage) and up to \$50,000 for a qualifying business development project. The [Rural Enterprise Zone/Non-Profit \(ENZP\) Program](#), meanwhile, encourages nonprofit organizations to implement projects that yield positive community and economic impacts in rural Enterprise Zone Areas. Participating nonprofits benefit by being allowed to provide a state tax credit to donors supporting the EZNP-associated project. Up to \$75,000 in tax credits is available each year for all projects associated with the program; no more than \$37,500 in credits may be allocated to any one project. Eligible organizations include arts and cultural entities such as museums and theatres. Eligible projects include a community event or project that fosters community and economic development and/or the construction, renovation or acquisition of property to be used for cultural programming, tourism, or community and economic development.

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- **National Association of Counties' Creative Counties Placemaking Challenge**: In 2017, a [team of creative entrepreneurs](#) from rural Iron County, Utah, was selected as one of seven participants in the National Association of Counties' Creative Counties Placemaking Challenge. Through the program, the Iron County team will receive technical assistance and other support over two years in support of its [local creative placemaking project](#), which aims to revive Cedar City's historic downtown district by establishing a cultural corridor between it and the Beverley Taylor Sorenson Center for the Arts at Southern Utah University, which has received funding from the Utah Division of Arts & Museums. The project will promote neighborhood engagement and business development within the corridor. It also will foster partnerships with rural community organizations to leverage the arts to address countywide socioeconomic issues, such as intergenerational poverty, affordable housing, work-force skill development and digital literacy. In March 2018, the Iron County team will join the other six teams in Polk County, Iowa, to participate in a training and peer-exchange workshop. There they will receive "intensive, hands-on training designed to boost their potential to integrate arts and culture into solutions to local economic development and quality of place challenges." They also will develop action plans to guide their efforts. Following the convening, all seven teams will continue to receive individual assistance to support implementation of their unique creative placemaking strategies.
- **Rural and Proud Initiative**: In 2016, Epicenter—a nonprofit that works to foster local artists, entrepreneurs and businesses—began an arts based community revitalization effort in Green River, Utah, a town of fewer than 1,000 residents. Epicenter is working with the municipality, a local community center, a local business group, U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Utah and other groups. Aspects of the development effort

include cultural asset and public art planning. The National Endowment for the Arts supported the effort through an Our Town grant; learn more from its [funding announcement](#). Also, in 2017, *NEA Arts Magazine* featured an [in-depth description](#) of the history of the initiative and the layers of state and federal investment in it.

- [Traditional Arts of Bears Ears](#): Five Native American tribes are working with [Utah Diné Bikéyah](#)—a nonprofit group that helps indigenous communities protect their culturally significant ancestral land—to leverage the arts, culture and community resources to foster a sustainable future for rural San Juan County, Utah. The project encourages a vision of economic growth not dependent on resource extraction but based on local culture and talent. ArtPlace has supported the project through a grant; learn more from its [funding announcement](#).

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Vermont Arts Council

- [Vermont Creative Network](#): This is a program of the Vermont Arts Council (VAC) that aims to cultivate the state's creative sector and, as a result, to improve quality of life, boost local economies and strengthen the fiber of communities. The network, which VAC launched in 2015 in celebration of its 50th anniversary, is a broad coalition of organizations, businesses and individuals committed to embedding creativity into Vermont's DNA. Through it, VAC fosters a number of opportunities for participants, such as mentorships, peer-to-peer learning, cross-sector engagement, communication and planning services, and other things that advance or leverage creative activities. Inspiration for the program came from the [Vermont Farm to Plate Network](#) as well as effective community development practices such as collective impact, results based accountability and appreciative inquiry.
- [Animating Infrastructure Grant](#): This public art program awards grants of \$1,000-\$15,000 to collaborations between artists and communities working to integrate artwork into existing or new infrastructure. (The program broadly defines "infrastructure" as anything that serves a community, such as buildings, parks, trails, bike paths, bridges, small-scale renewable energy installations, etc.) Grants cover artist fees and the costs of artwork fabrication and installation. Eligible projects are to enliven public spaces and community spirit and may be carried out by municipal governments, nonprofit organizations, schools, libraries, downtown associations, chambers of commerce and other groups. By supporting the work of Vermonters animating their built, natural and social environments, the Vermont Arts Council aims to cultivate unique and inspiring creative placemaking efforts as well as to document the lasting impact of public art.
- [The Danville Transportation Project](#): This program—a 15-year (1999-2014) partnership between the Vermont Arts Council, Vermont Agency of Transportation and Town of Danville—leveraged the expertise of engineers, artists and community members to redevelop a section of U.S. Highway Route 2 that runs through the center of Danville, Vermont, a town of about 2,100 residents. Its design mandate was to strengthen the community's sense of place and to celebrate its natural, built and cultural assets.

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- [Rockingham Arts & Museum Project](#): The Rockingham Arts and Museum Project (RAMP) launched in 1995 with the goal of leveraging the arts to revitalize the former mill town of Bellows Falls, Vermont, a rural community with about 3,000 residents. Over the years, RAMP—which is a grantee of the Vermont Arts Council—has developed a [strategy for community revitalization](#) involving public art initiatives, brick-and-mortar projects, and partnerships between artists and regional economic developers. In addition to presenting arts programming and maintaining a gallery space, the organization has collaborated with a number of other arts and social-service groups, businesses, and municipal leaders to the community's benefit. For example, it worked with Housing Vermont and The Rockingham Area Land Trust on a \$1.2 million project to [restore a historic building](#) in the downtown corridor that now features affordable artist housing and studios as well as six commercial storefronts and a gallery space.

- [Artists, Artisans, and Entrepreneurs: Creative Economy of the East Central Vermont Region](#): This is a creative economy strategic plan for the Two Rivers–Ottawquechee Regional Commission and the East Central Vermont Economic Development District, which represent a number of rural communities. The 2016 plan has seven goals with action strategies.
- [Next Stage Arts Project](#): This theatre organization is an anchor cultural institution in Putney, Vermont, and, through its programming and community connections, has contributed to the rural town's economic revitalization. In 2014, it received an [ArtPlace grant](#) that underwrote the renovation of its facility, which was damaged by Hurricane Irene and subsequent fires.
- [Master Cultural Plan for Burlington's South End](#): In 2014, the Burlington City Arts Foundation—a Vermont Arts Council grantee—and the City of Burlington Planning and Zoning Department began an artist-led process to develop a master cultural plan for the South End of Burlington, Vermont, the largest (albeit still small) city in rural Vermont. As part of the planning project, artists facilitated community workshops to organize public art installations reflective of the history and culture of the neighborhood. The National Endowment for the Arts supported the effort with an Our Town grant.

Vermont Creative Economy Studies [Back to Index](#)

- [Artists, Artisans, and Entrepreneurs: Creative Economy of the East Central Vermont Region](#) (Two Rivers–Ottawquechee Regional Commission and the East Central Vermont Economic Development District, 2016)
- [The Economic Footprint of the Arts in Vermont: An Update](#) (Center for Policy Analysis, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 2014)

Virginia [Back to Index](#)

Virginia Commission for the Arts

- [Creative Communities Partnership Grants](#): Through this program, the Virginia Commission for the Arts matches up to \$4,500 in tax monies given by town, city, and county governments to local arts organizations. Roughly half of the Creative Communities Partnership awards in 2017 went to rural communities.

Site-Specific Examples in Virginia [Back to Index](#)

- [Round the Mountain: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network](#): This nonprofit group in rural Abingdon, Virginia, has its origins in the Virginia Works Initiative of former Governor Mark Warner (D), which supported efforts to develop southwestern Virginia as a cultural tourism destination. The organization's mission is to "promote sustainable economic development of the region's communities by assisting local artisans with marketing, educational, and entrepreneurial opportunities." It supports local artists and artisans by offering arts entrepreneurship workshops, one-on-one coaching and networking opportunities like group discussions. It also has an education campaign that communicates the value of artists, artisans and other cultural producers to community and business leaders around the region. Additionally, the organization coordinated the development of 15 artisan trails. In 2012, the group, which is a Virginia Commission for the Arts grantee, received an [Appalachian Regional Commission grant](#) for a project to foster the inclusion of cultural and natural assets in the region's downtown revitalization plans and to help local artisans with marketing, educational and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- [Artisans Center of Virginia](#): This is the official state-designated nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Virginia's artisan industry. The organization—which is based in Greenville, Virginia, a town of fewer than 1,000 residents located in the Shenandoah Valley—"develops and implements systems and strategies to improve economic outcomes for Virginia artisans and their communities while assisting them in promoting their local artisan culture." Its efforts include developing collaborative relationships that support artisan-entrepreneurs, increasing their business acumen and strengthening cultural tourism infrastructures. The organization maintains a network of 18 artisan trails. It is a grantee of the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

- [Crooked Road Heritage Music Trail](#): This cultural trail celebrates traditional gospel, bluegrass and mountain music. Connecting venues in Appalachian Virginia such as the Blue Ridge Music Center, the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance and the Carter Family Fold, the trail is a cultural tourism attraction and a source of economic development in rural communities. The project has received financial support from the Virginia Commission for the Arts.
- [CIRD Workshop in Pembroke, Virginia](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2008, CIRD held a workshop in Pembroke, Virginia, a rural town of about 1,200 residents, to address how to connect individuals and businesses to the Appalachian Trail in order leverage cultural and heritage tourism opportunities.
- [Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion](#): This is an annual music festival held in Bristol, Virginia, a town along the rural Virginia-Tennessee border. The weekend-long event, which has received support from the Virginia Commission for the Arts, features about 130 bands on 20 stages throughout town. Attendance is generally around 45,000. A 2015 [economic impact analysis](#) of the festival found that it creates 178 FTE jobs, which yield a total income of \$5.19 million. The total (direct, indirect and induced) business tax revenue is \$1.45 million.
- [Barter Theatre](#): This venue—which earned the "State Theatre of Virginia" designation in 1946—is located in Abingdon in rural southwest Virginia. It opened in 1933 and claims to be the nation's longest-running professional theatre. An [economic impact study](#) of it found that in 2012 it had "total spending effect" (including indirect and induced spending) of \$34 million and that it generated a total of \$3.08 million in business taxes, 485 jobs and \$11.01 million in worker income. The theatre, a Virginia Commission for the Arts grantee, launched a project in 2014 to help nine other rural communities leverage their historic theatre as "catalysts for reinvigorating their downtowns." ArtPlace supported and produced a [summary](#) of the effort.
- [Cape Charles Arts Plan](#): In 2012, Arts Enter Cape Charles—which has received support from the Virginia Commission for the Arts—began developing an arts plan to transform a rural community of about 1,000 residents into an arts and culture destination. The effort included community meetings and survey and design charettes focused on identifying public spaces that could be activated with cultural activities and by developing an arts walk, signage and arts programming. It received an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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- ★ [The Economic Impact of Heritage Tourism in Virginia](#) (Preservation Virginia, 2017)
- [Virginia's Creative Economy](#) (Virginia Tech, 2009)

Washington [Back to Index](#)

ArtsWA

- [Certified Creative Districts](#): Legislatively established in 2017, this program permits both local governments and federally recognized Native American tribes to apply for ArtsWA certification of their cultural district(s). ArtsWA staff provide [technical assistance](#)—including training, networking and grant resources—prior to and after the completion of the certification process. For example, ArtsWA designed a [Community Readiness Toolkit](#) based on economic and community development best practices to help communities applying for certification. Affordable housing is an ArtsWA priority for certified districts, especially those in rural areas. While the program's authorizing legislation does not assign it a rural or urban focus, ArtsWA anticipates that most of its resources for the program will go to smaller, rural communities.
- [Creative Economy Local Partnerships](#): More than 10 years ago, ArtsWA helped the Western States Arts Federation develop the Creative Vitality Index (CVI), a tool—now called the Creative Vitality Suite—for tracking the impact of the creative economy at the city, county, state and national levels. In 2013, ArtsWA supported eight CVI pilot projects by awarding technical assistance grants to participating communities and facilitating

related consultations with a state economist to help them leverage data to inform local creative economy initiatives. One pilot took place in the rural San Juan Islands, where the San Juan County Arts Council partnered with the San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau and the San Juan County Economic Development Council to [benchmark and strengthen](#) the creative economy.

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- [Mighty Tieton](#): This is an "artisan business incubator" based in Tieton, Washington, a rural town of about 1,200 residents. It aims "to establish successful, distinctive businesses by connecting creative entrepreneurs with local resources" in order to generate jobs, improve the local economy and revitalize the community. The incubator provides space as well as production, marketing, storage and fulfillment services to its resident artisans. So far, about a dozen artisan businesses have developed through the incubator.
- [Tieton Mosaic Project](#): This community and economic development project combines creative placemaking with artisan training in Tieton, Washington, a rural community of about 1,200 residents. It supports the creation and installation of mosaic installations in public spaces to create a visual identity for the community based on "the bold typographic fruit crate label designs" associated with the region's agricultural past. It also supports mosaic apprenticeships for local residents, who, once trained, produce the mosaics and install them on buildings and in civic spaces. The apprenticeships help enable participating artists and artisans launch sustainable businesses and become arts entrepreneurs. The Tieton Mosaic Project is a partnership of the nonprofit Tieton Arts & Humanities, the City of Tieton and other community stakeholders. It has received support from ArtsWA, the National Endowment for the Arts and private foundations.
- [Rural Communities Design Initiative](#): This is a collaborative effort between the School of Design + Construction at Washington State University—which has received funding from ArtsWA—and rural community partners throughout the Pacific Northwest that "aims to enhance the social, cultural, economic, and natural capital of unique rural places through design interventions in the physical environment." Its projects foster rural economic development by transforming the built environment through "design interventions"—such as "community visioning, participatory design and capacity-building." Each project is based on the concept of a Rural Community Studio through which students and professors work with community members in participatory design process to develop plans for sparking and sustaining economic vitality.
- [Art Confab](#): This an annual two-day event "focused on financial sustainability, networking, and inspiration for artists and communities in Central Washington." It takes place in Ellensburg, a rural community of about 20,000 residents. The convening, according to ArtsWA staff, has helped local artists develop entrepreneurial skills.
- [CIRD Workshop in Chimacum, Washington](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2017, CIRD held a workshop in Chimacum, Washington, an agrarian town of about 1,600 residents, to address improving walkability and livability, securing affordable housing and celebrating the town's cultural vitality.
- [Uniontown, Washington](#): In 2012, the Uniontown Community Development Association began an effort to enhance the [Dahmen Barn](#), which opened in rural Uniontown, Washington, in 2006 as a community arts space featuring studio, classroom and performance spaces and a cooperative retail shop. The project included the creation of an outdoor amphitheater, an area for public art and additional classroom and studio spaces. An [Our Town grant](#) from the National Endowment for the Arts and an [ArtPlace grant](#) helped support the endeavor, which aimed in part to improve the connection between the arts center and the local business district.

Washington Creative Economy Study [Back to Index](#)

- [Snapshot of the Arts in Washington State](#) (Creative Vitality Suite, 2014)

West Virginia [Back to Index](#)

West Virginia Commission on the Arts

- [Certified Arts Community](#): Through this program, the West Virginia Commission on the Arts (WVCA) certifies cultural districts, which, in turn, can leverage the designation to foster cultural tourism, creative placemaking and related economic development. In adjudicating applications for the program from municipalities and counties, WVCA prioritizes those from communities committed to a development strategy that integrates the arts, heritage and business.
- [Community Connections](#): This two-year grant program helps communities develop a cultural plan, which according to the West Virginia Commission on the Arts, "assesses community resources, develops dialogue, and identifies the most efficient ways to use existing resources while developing new resources to provide a rich cultural environment in the community." Nonprofit organizations and local or county government agencies are eligible to apply. First-year applicants may receive up to \$5,000 to coordinate a cultural planning process that includes the input of artists, arts organizations, local government agencies, businesses, chambers of commerce, tourism professionals, educators and other stakeholders. Second-year applicants may receive up to \$5,000 to implement their cultural plan.

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- [Tamarack Foundation](#): This foundation, which has received support from the West Virginia Commission on the Arts, supports creative entrepreneurs by helping them access new markets and grow their business. Through a number of programs, it provides business training, financial assistance and connections "between creatives, consumers, government, the nonprofit sector and West Virginia communities." Its [Rural to Urban Markets](#) program helps arts entrepreneurs expand an established business. Over three years, they receive technical training, one-on-one peer advice and financial support. The [West Virginia Craft Week](#) is an annual statewide celebration of art and craft. Participating artists and artisans host open studios, create pop-up shops, organize exhibitions and coordinate "artist trails." The [West Virginia Creative Network](#) is an on-line platform designed to help artists connect with one another and to identify career opportunities. The [Reduced Rate Service Provider Network](#) connects member artists and artisans with consultants and companies who provide expertise and services at a reduced rate. The foundation also facilitates the creation of [arts and craft trails](#) throughout the state, which locate studios and shops as cultural tourism destinations. Finally, it is developing a [Creative Business Incubator](#), which will be "a space to drive and sustain growth for burgeoning creative businesses."
- [Create Your State Tour](#): This is a multimedia educational presentation and workshop that inspires and empowers creative community revitalization and development. Designed and facilitated by cultural entrepreneurs working in West Virginia, it focuses on strategic planning for community leaders, entrepreneurs, artists and stakeholders. Participants have access to an on-line toolkit, videos, webinars and more. They also receive one-on-one guidance from the Create Your State team. The program is funded by [The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation](#) and so far has supported 15 communities in the state.
- [Huntington, West Virginia](#): In 2014, the Coalfield Development Corporation received an [ArtPlace grant](#) to repurpose a former factory in rural Huntington, West Virginia, "as a creative hub for community gathering and engagement, on-the-job training in craft work utilizing reclaimed materials, and live-work space for artists, artisans, and creative small business incubation."
- [ArtSpring](#): This organization grew from an arts festival first organized in 2011 by gallery owners, artists and musicians working in rural Tucker County, West Virginia. Subsequently, the annual [ArtSpring High Mountain Arts Festival](#) has grown to become a cultural tourism draw. The event now includes street musicians, square dancing, nature-photography walks, theatre performances, gallery exhibitions, open studio tours, plein air painting, arts and craft demonstrations, a silent auction, a farmers market and more. The organization supporting it also has grown to offer year-round programming, such as a regular gallery walk, that contributes to the region's revitalization through the arts. ArtSpring also is working with the Woodlands Development Group—a certified Community Housing Development Organization based in Elkins, West Virginia—on a rural creative placemaking

project in Thomas, West Virginia, a community of about 600 residents. The project—which is part of the Rural Placemaking Program, an endeavor of the buildingcommunityWORKSHOP and Housing Assistance Council that has received financial support from the National Endowment for the Arts—is developing public art and wayfinding installations "that reflect the artistic assets of the region and highlight the quickly developing cultural identity of Thomas." It will create an on-line map of arts attractions in the area and a new information kiosk for arts related tourism. (To learn more about the project, see pp. 24-26 of this issue of [Rural Voices](#) from the Housing Assistance Council.)

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- [West Virginia Creative Entrepreneur Study 2016](#) (Tamarack Foundation for the Arts, 2016)

Wisconsin [Back to Index](#)

Wisconsin Arts Board

- [Phantom Art Galleries](#): This program, which the Wisconsin Arts Board ran as a pilot in 2011 and 2012, encouraged partnerships between artists, arts professionals, arts organizations and community development groups to collaborate on downtown development efforts. It provided funding and technical assistance that enabled participating communities to revitalize vacant storefronts as temporary art galleries. This had the effect of promoting local artists while also making commercial real estate more attractive to potential businesses. Two of the communities that benefited from the program, [Chilton](#) and [Marshfield](#), are rural.
- [Woodland Indian Arts Initiative](#): Through this program, which began in 2001, the Wisconsin Arts Board awards grants of \$1,500-\$4,000 to tribal governments and organizations that directly serve Native Americans in Wisconsin. The program supports a number of activities that can contribute to cultural tourism and related economic growth. These include technical assistance and professional development; festivals, markets and exhibitions; documentation of cultural activities; and knowledge and arts administration.

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- [Wormfarm Institute](#): The mission of this nonprofit based in rural Wisconsin is to connect farming, ecology and the arts "to rekindle the cultural and enhance the economic possibilities of our region while celebrating its unique natural and human history." The organization, which has received funding from the Wisconsin Arts Board, realizes its mission through several programs. [Fermentation Fest](#) is an annual celebration of "food, farming and fermentation," featuring "'live culture' in all its forms from the practical to the metaphorical—yogurt to dance, poetry to sauerkraut." It attracts farmers, chefs, artists, poets and performers for 10 days of tastings, demonstrations, cooking classes, art events, performances, food carts and more. One component of the festival is the [Farm/Art DTour](#), which is self-guided tour through more than 50 miles of rural Sauk County that highlights the fecundity of the region's farmland and creativity. Interspersed on farms along the route are large-scale temporary art installations, roadside poetry, interpretive signage and "Pasture Performances." ArtPlace has helped support the project and produced a [summary](#) of it. [Roadside Culture Stands](#), which aims to integrate culture and agriculture, supports mobile farm stands that display and sell local produce and the work of local artists. Through a competitive process, the stands are designed and built by artists. The stands are erected in both rural and urban communities, including those located in food deserts with little access to fresh and health food. Finally, [Test Plots](#) is a series of unique exhibits, lectures and field trips that spark community dialogue, learning and engagement. Each one features the work of local artists and leaders "representing the healthy rural/urban flow that is vital to any thriving region."
- [Waunakee Creative Economy Initiative](#): The city of Waunakee, Wisconsin—a rural town of about 13,600 residents—has been conducting a creative economy initiative since 2011, when it appointed a task force of local cultural stakeholders focused on enhancing the community's "profile as a creative, innovative place to live, work, and thrive." Working toward its goal of drafting a five-year [strategic plan](#) for developing Waunakee's creative economy, the task force met with community leaders, analyzed cultural assets and engaged residents

through public events, among other things. In 2017, the municipal government established a new task force—consisting of artists, arts leaders and representatives from the municipality, the school district and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation—to implement aspects of the city's creative economy plan, including the creation of "a new entity to encourage and implement creative economy projects, businesses, and services across Waunakee." A student consulting group from the [Bolz Center for Arts Administration](#) at University of Wisconsin-Madison will support the task force by conducting research and case studies, facilitating community conversations and helping to design the forthcoming creative economy entity.

- [A Visual Arts Tour of Wisconsin's East Coast](#): This four-day itinerary is a product of Travel Wisconsin, a program of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism. The itinerary focuses on museums and other visual arts institutions, some of which are in rural areas.
- [Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin](#): In 2014, the InCOURAGE Community Foundation began a project to restore the former headquarters of the local newspaper of Wisconsin Rapids, a small city in a rural part of the state. The building renovation—which created spaces for artists, local food processors and other creative entrepreneurs—was designed so as to create a "community accelerator" supporting creativity, economic growth, environmental sustainability and community cohesion. ArtPlace supported the project; learn more from its [description](#) of it.
- [Rural Arts Road Trip](#): Every October, a group of artists, artisans and art galleries collaborate to organize and host a weekend-long arts and culture excursion through rural Calumet County, Wisconsin. The cultural tourism effort is an economic boon to the participating entrepreneurs as well as to the restaurants, hotels and other local businesses that benefit from the annual influx of visitors.

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- [Arts and Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts & Cultural Organizations & Their Audiences in the State of Wisconsin](#) (Americans for the Arts, 2017)
- [The Arts and Creative Economy: 21st Century Growth for Wisconsin](#) (Arts Wisconsin)

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Wyoming Arts Council

- [Wyoming Independent Music Initiative](#): The Wyoming Arts Council (WAC) launched this program in 2016 to support local musicians and to leverage the state's independent music scenes as drivers of community development and social cohesion. One component of the program is [IMTour](#), which is an on-line tool WAC developed with the Western States Arts Federation to help independent musicians book gigs with nonprofit presenting organizations in the western United States. Musicians that become an IMTour Roster Artist can create a profile and share samples of their work on the website. They also can create a searchable electronic press kit. IMTour offers subsidies to presenters booking a roster artist. It has more than \$250,000 from state, public and private sources to this end. Another aspect is the Laramie Music Business Incubator, which, in 2017, facilitated a number of professional development opportunities for participating bands, such as counseling from the Wyoming Technology Business Center and performance showcases with music industry professionals. Currently, WAC is developing new partnerships for the incubator.
- [Rural Arts Access Grant](#): This project grant awards up to \$750 to arts organizations working in geographically isolated and rural areas. (The local population may not exceed 3,000 residents.)
- [Community Support Grant](#): This program awards project and general operating support grants to organizations that serve their community through the arts. One of the program's categories offers awards of up to \$1,000 to efforts enabling "outreach to rural communities."

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- [Sheridan, Wyoming](#): Sheridan is a town of about 20,000 residents in rural northern Wyoming that has been supporting local creative economic development for at least 10 years. In 2008, the City of Sheridan, Northern Wyoming Community College District, Sheridan County Chamber of Commerce and Forward Sheridan

commissioned a cultural sector inventory. The resulting report, [Arts and Culture: Economic Inventory, Assessment, Strategy and Work Plan for Sheridan, Wyoming](#), offers a set of detailed recommendations that define and prioritize creative economic development goals, quantify funding requirements and identify potential funding sources. In 2014, the chambers of commerce of Sheridan County and neighboring Johnson County formed a [Creative Economies Council](#) with representatives from Sheridan College, Sheridan Artists' Guild and other members of the creative arts community. In 2015 the Sheridan Economic and Educational Development Authority received a grant from the Wyoming Business Council to undertake the work that the Creative Economies Council and the 2008 report prioritized. Among the projects selected was a [cooperative endeavor](#) to aid the Sagebrush Community Art Center and the Cowboy Carousel Center in providing technical support to regional artists in selling their artwork and participating in the creative economy. The Wyoming Arts Council has funded a number of the partners who have contributed to this effort, including the Sheridan Artists' Guild, the Northern Wyoming Community College District and the town of Sheridan. Since this effort, Sheridan's [arts and culture](#) organizations have become a prominent part of the community's asset portfolio, taking center stage in local tourism and economic development marketing. For example, the [WYO Performing Arts and Education Center](#) has become a cultural anchor after its massive development project, which was [funded](#) in part by the state government. The center is now associated with the theater and dance programs of Sheridan College.

- [Places of Possibility: Public Art & Placemaking Toolkit for Rural Communities](#): Jackson Hole Public Art—which is a grantee of the Wyoming Arts Council that supports art projects that "inspire lasting cultural, educational and economic benefits"—produced this in-depth but clear guide for leveraging public art as a tool of rural creative placemaking. The guide addresses case-making, funding, project planning and implementation, promotion and more. Public art, according to this technical assistance resource, can celebrate cultural heritage and create memorable experiences, making it a powerful tool of cultural tourism. It also stimulates local economies as it generates pedestrian activity in downtown corridors and inspires redevelopment of abandoned or underused buildings and spaces.
- [Downtown Vitalization through Digital Media Arts](#): Wyoming Community Media (WCM) is undertaking a creative economy project that leverages the "emerging digital media based community" of Cheyenne, Wyoming. Through the initiative, WCM is working with a number of partners—including Laramie County Community College, the City of Cheyenne, the Cheyenne Convention and Visitors' Bureau, the Wyoming Film Office, and Wyoming Lifestyle Magazine TV—to attract webmasters, photographers, filmmakers, animators and other digital artists to Cheyenne to help revitalize its downtown business district. WCM plans to create additional partnerships with local cultural organizations to produce promotional videos aiming to increase cultural tourism. In addition, WCM is collaborating with Laramie County Community College on developing a digital media filmmaking curriculum. Finally, WCM is facilitating monthly a Downtown Brown Bag Lunch series for local business owners and organizations "to position themselves as potential purveyors of goods and services or as locations to the film and digital media industry or for artists wanting to learn about entrepreneurship and the business of art." While the project is focused on Cheyenne—which, with a population of about 64,000, is Wyoming's largest city—its results will benefit the many rural communities that surround the community. WCM, Laramie County Community College and the city of Cheyenne have all received funding from the Wyoming Arts Council.
- [CIRD Workshop in Wheatland, Wyoming](#): The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation that helps rural communities leverage design thinking "to build upon existing assets and improve the way a community looks, its quality of life, and its economic viability." In 2009, CIRD held a workshop in Wheatland, Wyoming, a town of about 4,000 residents, to address revitalizing the local economy through cultural heritage tourism and a Main Street program.