

2026 State Arts Agency Grant Making Facts

Individual Artists

Support for Individual Artists

Artists form the foundation of a state's creative environment. They are creators and individual entrepreneurs, providing many of the products and designs that drive innovation and shape a state's cultural character. Many artists also work as educators, providing training in creative skills and passing on cultural traditions from one generation to the next. State arts agencies (SAAs) support artists through a variety of grants and services. Awards to artists are supported through a mixture of federal funds, state funds and private dollars.

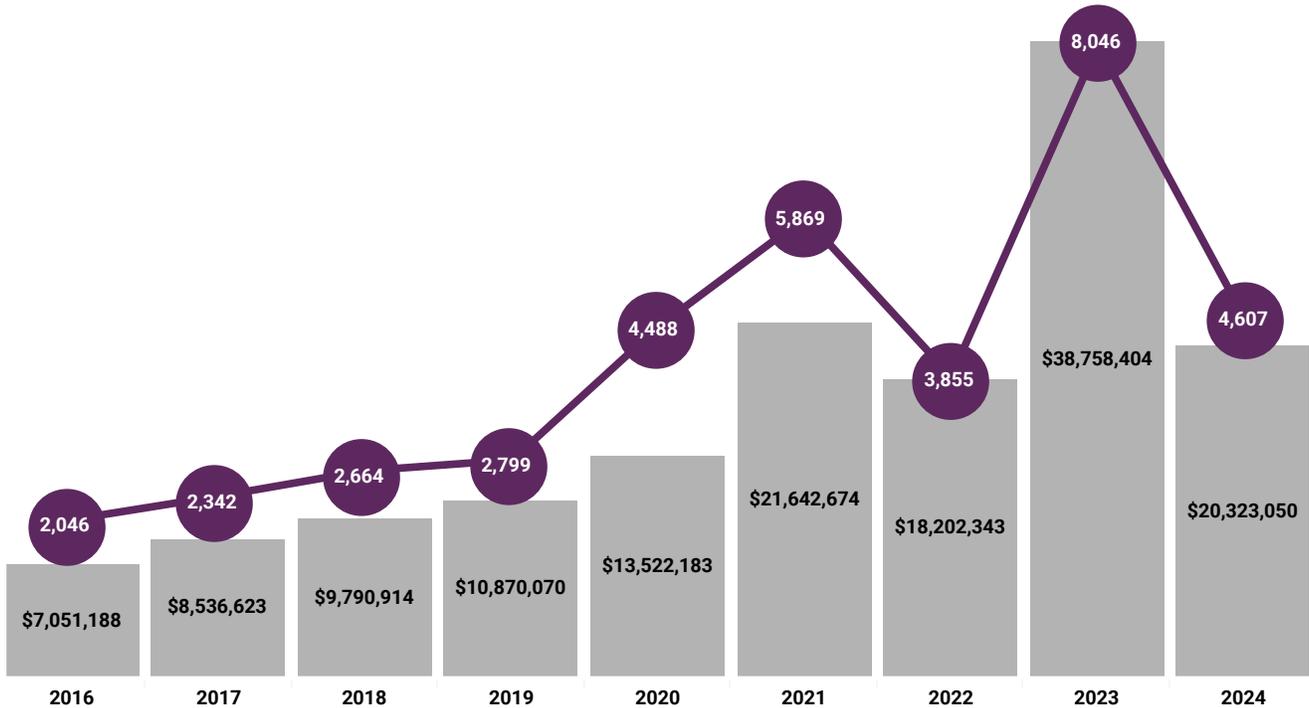
Grant Funding for Individual Artists

State arts agencies have significantly increased their investment in grants to individual artists over the past decade, showing substantial growth that aligns with the overall expansion of state arts agency grant making. Individual artist grants represent a meaningful portion of all SAA grant portfolios, though they make up a smaller share of total grant dollars. These figures should be viewed as conservative estimates of SAA investments in individual artists, as they exclude both grants to intermediary organizations that redistribute funds to artists. Also excluded from these figures are the numerous artists receiving state and regional grants via organizations, a figure that totals more than 2 million annually.

Total dollars awarded	\$20,323,050
Percentage of all grant dollars	3.0%
Number of grants awarded	4,607
Share of all SAA grants	16%
Median award size	\$4,000
Communities served*	3,115

*Communities served is based on unique census tracts receiving grants or where activities took place.

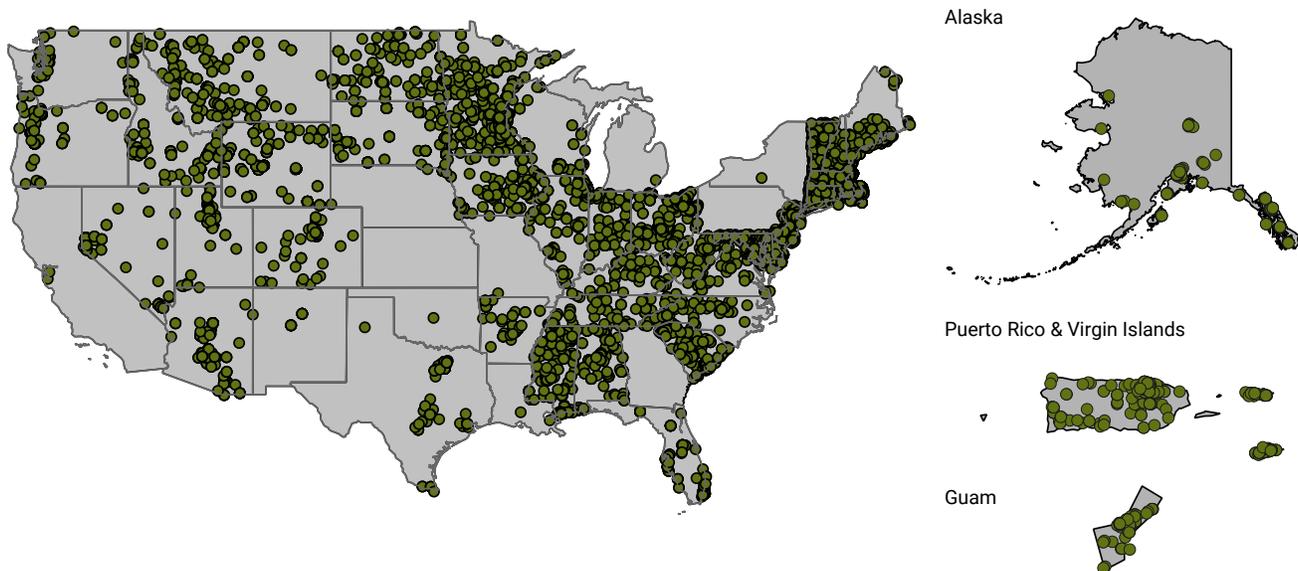
Individual Artists Grant Making 10-Year Trend



Note. The sharp variation in FY2022-2023 reflects Massachusetts' grant program changes and a major budget increase that funded 4,049 individual artist grants in FY2023 (an increase of 2400% from the previous year).

■ Total dollars
● Total grants

Individual Artists Grant Locations FY2020-2024



Examples of State Arts Agency Support for Individual Artists

For more, visit NASAA's [State Arts Agency Innovations archive](#).



Fellowship grants encourage the development of new creative works and advance artist careers. They are a common type of grant support and make up close to a third of SAAs' individual artist grants in terms of dollar amounts. Fellowship grants typically include public engagement requirements.

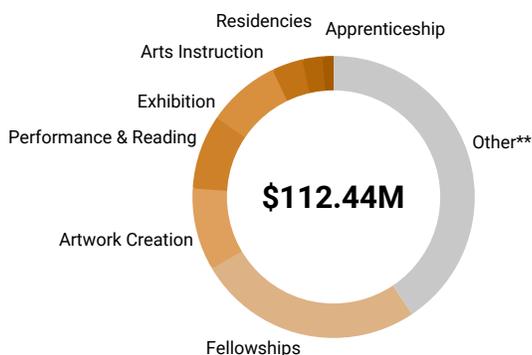
SAAs also provide grants for commissions, as well as project support for performances, exhibits, apprenticeships, professional development, instruction and residencies.



Programs and services: Beyond grant making, state arts agencies provide services and information to assist artists. One important SAA goal is to broaden opportunities for artists to showcase their work. To this end, numerous SAAs maintain artist rosters, which promote performing artists and encourage their booking for residencies and touring. Many SAAs offer galleries (both physical and virtual) and statewide art collections that encourage the display of art in public spaces. Some SAAs also offer digital marketplaces, online platforms that facilitate marketing and product sales. SAAs further provide training and networking services through conferences, workshops and web seminars that assist artists with business development and connect them with peers.

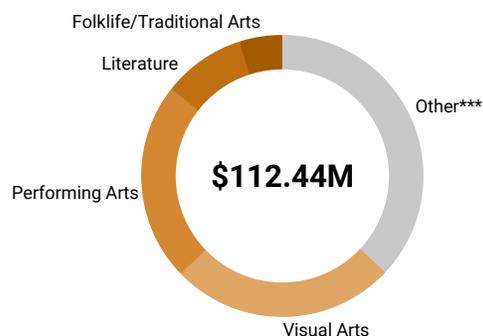
What Do Individual Artists Grants Support?

Activities Funded FY2020-2024



**Other activities include marketing, fairs/festivals, equipment acquisition, publication, etc.

Artistic Disciplines FY2020-2024



***Other artistic disciplines include media arts, interdisciplinary and design.

This report draws on data from state arts agencies' Final Descriptive Reports of grant-making activity submitted annually to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and NASAA. NASAA's collection of grant-making statistics is supported in part through a cooperative agreement with the NEA. For more information on the work of state arts agencies, call 202-347-6352, email nasaa@nasaa-arts.org or visit <https://nasaa-arts.org/>.