

Performance Measurement and Evaluation Framework

*Approved by the NASAA Planning & Budget Committee
July 2023*

Why does NASAA conduct performance measurement and evaluation?

NASAA engages in performance measurement for a variety of reasons, including our desire to:

- **Demonstrate transparency and accountability for being a well-managed organization.** Most professional associations track basic metrics relating to their membership, budget and operations. NASAA does this through our [performance metrics](#) dashboard.
- **Inform action planning and the design, delivery and improvement of services to state arts agencies.** Feedback on member needs shapes the priorities in NASAA's [action plans](#) and helps us originate new services. We also conduct targeted [program evaluations](#) of specific programs/functions. These evaluations help us attune our offerings to member needs.
- **Provide pathways for member input in shaping NASAA's work.** Ongoing consultation not only gives NASAA's work good aim, it contributes to a sense of member ownership. In addition to the substance of what we learn from members, the larger process of asking state arts agencies for feedback is important to members and is part of NASAA's organizational culture. Annual [field interviews](#) conducted by the Nominating Committee embody this practice.
- **Address National Endowment for the Arts expectations.** Every three years NASAA applies to the NEA for our National Services (Partnership Agreement) grant. The adjudication criteria for that award include consideration of, "metrics and/or other relevant information used to monitor the organization's progress."

What principles inform NASAA's approach?

There are many schools of thought on what makes a good performance metric. NASAA generally aims for indicators that are **relevant to member/stakeholder satisfaction** and are reasonably **efficient to collect**, to minimize survey burden on state arts agencies. This is

sometimes a tough balancing act, since nuanced and useful information inevitably requires time for members to supply.

NASAA researches many facets of state arts agency strength: appropriations, staffing, policy and programming. But we don't use these data points as metrics. Rather, our typical practice is to measure things that fall **within NASAA's sphere of influence**.

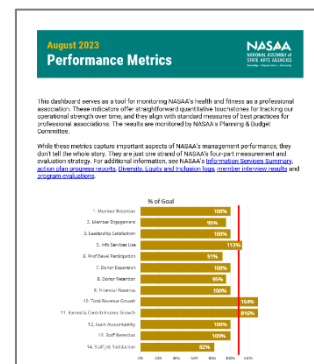
Transparency is a core value that undergirds our measurement strategies. Multiple committees—including Planning & Budget, Nominating and Governance—review and use the results. Findings are shared publicly with the board and membership and are [accessible via the NASAA website](#).

As we meet these multiple measurement needs, NASAA strives to **right-size** the time spent on evaluation activities. While we have a strong commitment to continual improvement, we also know that state arts agencies want NASAA to focus on member assistance. Delivery of services takes priority.

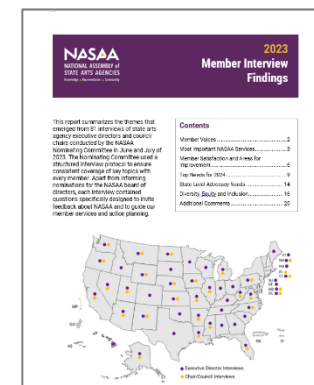
What measurement mechanisms does NASAA employ?

Each evaluation method has its own advantages and disadvantages and yields distinct kinds of information. Rather than adopting one single set of metrics, NASAA has adopted a four-part "portfolio" approach.

#1 – Performance Metrics: These indicators serve as a dashboard for monitoring NASAA's general fitness as a professional association. They offer straightforward quantitative touchstones for tracking our operational strength, and they align with standard measures of best practices for professional associations. Information is relatively simple to harvest from existing information sources.



#2 – Member Interviews: The Nominating Committee conducts peer interviews of every state arts agency chair, executive director and deputy director each summer, to seek nominations for the NASAA board. The Planning & Budget Committee piggybacks on this field outreach to ask questions about satisfaction with NASAA, most/least valuable services, member needs and emerging issues. Information is collected through a structured interview protocol. The resulting [treasure-trove of qualitative data](#) informs action plan priorities and helps NASAA adapt our services to current state arts agency needs.



we are fulfilling our mission. They are conducted intermittently in consultation with NASAA's Planning & Budget Committee and management staff.

#4 – Targeted Program Evaluations: NASAA routinely conducts evaluations of our professional development programs, research services and special initiatives. Methods vary, but the common purpose of program evaluations is to support program planning and service improvements. For recent examples, visit the [Measurement and Evaluation](#) section of our website.

