

Here's our final bulletin of the year to keep you up to speed on federal arts policy, NASAA resources and tips for staying connected with your fellow state arts commission members across the country. Share this report at your next council meeting!

Advocate for NEA FY2026 Funding

Congress is again focusing on finalizing fiscal year 2026 spending bills for all federal agencies—including for the Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, which funds the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Earlier this year, the Senate approved a bipartisan bill that maintains level funding for the NEA; the House advanced a version that includes a significant cut. Appropriators must now reconcile [those two positions](#).

Now is a particularly good time to reach out to your congressional delegation—especially to Republican offices, which currently lead both chambers. A simple, clear message is most effective: Support the Senate's proposal for level funding. It is also helpful to remind lawmakers that, through the [federal-state partnership](#), 40% of the NEA's grants flow directly to state and jurisdictional arts agencies and regional arts organizations. This structure ensures that every congressional district benefits from NEA investments, thus strengthening local cultural organizations, creative-sector jobs and access to the arts nationwide.

NASAA Executive Forum for Agency Leaders

In November, state and jurisdictional arts agency executive and deputy directors participated in the [NASAA Executive Forum](#), with the goal of strengthening state arts agency leadership teams and addressing critical issues and challenges facing our field. Discussion sessions at the Omaha, Nebraska, convening included Cultivating Advocacy Capacity, Scenario Planning for Uncertain Times, Creative Adaptations to Resource Constraints, The Case for the Arts in Limited Government and more. Participants also had the opportunity to explore innovative programming, artistic excellence and community engagement at several Omaha cultural venues.



Arts and Health Professional Learning Community

States and regions deploy a wide range of [cross-sector strategies for promoting health and community well-being](#). In partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, NASAA has created opportunities to identify and document these promising practices among state and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs) and regional arts organizations (RAOs).

The Arts and Health Professional Learning Community offers SAAs and RAOs working at the intersection of the arts and health a chance to explore approaches to arts and health programming. The initiative includes monthly conversations, two webinars, an in-person Hearts of Practice convening in February 2026 and a culminating report. You can review the webinar recordings below:

- [Arts & Health Research: The Case for Advancing Policy](#)
- [Improving Health through Prescribing the Arts](#)

Especially for Council Members

Whether you are a new state arts agency council/board member or would like a refresher about the field, you can count on NASAA. These resources were designed with YOU in mind!

- [About State Arts Agencies](#): Discover what state and jurisdictional arts agencies do.
- [Citizen Councils \(versus nonprofit boards\)](#): Explore important distinctions between serving on a state arts agency council and a 501(c)(3) or corporate board.
- [For Council Members](#): Get the basics on arts councils, advocacy, and how to stay informed and connected.
- [The Federal-State Partnership in the Arts](#): Learn how this exemplary collaboration improves arts access for all.
- [Advocacy resources](#)—both state and federal—abound.
- [Contact NASAA](#): We are here for you!



Supporting State Arts Agencies—Together

As a council member, you understand the power of coming together to advance the arts. NASAA is here to support you—strengthening your agency with the advocacy, research and resources you rely on. Now through December 31, your gift to NASAA will be **matched dollar for dollar** through our **Moving Forward Together** campaign. [Please make your gift today](#) to double your impact on state arts agencies nationwide. Your participation—at any level—truly matters. When we all support NASAA, we all move forward together. **Thank you!**

NASAA

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