



2026 State Arts Agency Arts Education Managers Professional Development Institute

October 5 – 7, Washington, D.C.

DRAFT Agenda

For more than 30 years, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) have supported professional development programming for state and jurisdictional arts agency (SAA) arts education managers. The annual Professional Development Institute (PDI) provides meaningful leadership development and technical assistance for this multifaceted field. As a result, arts education managers are knowledgeable leaders in their field through a peer network that new and seasoned managers alike find invaluable.

The purpose of the Professional Development Institute is to equip participants with skills necessary to succeed in their roles as state arts agency arts education managers. PDI attendees will gain job-specific tools and knowledge that are relevant across a wide array of state needs and circumstances.

Drawing inspiration from the capacity building strategies and relationships cultivated in Washington D.C., the 2026 Professional Development Institute explores topics and questions relevant to all 56 states and jurisdictions.

Guiding Question & Outcomes:

How can arts education managers strengthen locally rooted, youth-centered learning systems across their states and jurisdictions?

Learning Outcome 1: Participants will explore how arts learning elevates youth leadership development by embedding student voice in program design and decision-making.

Learning Outcome 2: Participants will identify community-engaged approaches to arts education that center local knowledge and partnership.

Learning Outcome 3: Participants will examine approaches for supporting and uplifting organizations and artists in preparing youth for the creative workforce.

Monday, October 5

All times are Eastern Standard Time.

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| 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. | Opening Plenary Session

Welcome Remarks |
| 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. | SAA Professional Development Module I

Close of Day 1 / Dinner on your own |
| 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. | New Arts Education Managers Dinner
(by invitation)

With arts education leaders from the National Endowment for the Arts |

Tuesday, October 6

All times are Eastern Standard Time.

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| 9:00 a.m. | Travel to venue |
| 9:30 – 10:00 a.m. | Arrival and Welcome Remarks |
| 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | SAA Professional Development Module II |
| 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. | Lunch (provided) |
| 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. | SAA Professional Development Module III |
| 4:00 p.m. | Travel to hotel |
| | Close of Day 2 / Dinner on your own |

Wednesday, October 7

All times are Eastern Standard Time.

9:30 a.m.	Travel to venue
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	SAA Professional Development Module IV
12:00 – 1:30 p.m.	SAA Regional Groups Lunch (provided)
1:30 – 3:00 p.m.	Closing Plenary Session and Arts Education Working Group Leadership Transition
	Travel to hotel
	End of PDI