



UNITED STATES URBAN ARTS FEDERATION (USUAF)

RESULTS FROM THE 2015 LOCAL ARTS AGENCY CENSUS
[AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS](#)

UNITED STATES URBAN ARTS FEDERATION (USUAF) RESULTS FROM THE 2015 LOCAL ARTS AGENCY CENSUS

In 2015, Americans for the Arts partnered with the National Endowment for the Arts to conduct The Local Arts Agency Census, the most comprehensive survey of the local arts agency (LAA) field ever conducted. Its purpose was to illuminate the ever adapting role of LAAs in ensuring a vital presence for the arts at the community level.

The survey process was designed by a task force of local arts agency, research, and policy leaders to ensure relevance and rigor. The Census was composed of both a long-form survey and a short-form survey that were sent to the 4,377 LAAs in the U.S tracked by Americans for the Arts. A total of 1,127 LAAs responded (641 submitted the long-form; 486 participated via the short-form), providing invaluable details about their budgets, programs, partnerships, grantmaking, diversity, and staffing.

Americans for the Arts defines a local arts agency (LAA) as a private organization or an agency of local government that promotes, supports, and develops the arts at the local level. LAAs are not discipline-specific—rather, they work to sustain their entire local arts industry. Each of the 4,500 LAAs in America is unique to the community that it serves and each evolves with its community—no two are exactly alike. What they all share, however, is the goal of enabling diverse forms of arts and culture to thrive, ensuring their broad accessibility to the public, and building healthier communities through the arts.

This report concentrates on the United States Urban Arts Federation (USUAF) a subset of LAAs that serve the 60 largest U.S cities. Fifty eight of those cities have an active local arts agency, and of those, 55 completed the long form Census, and one completed the short form version.

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List of Participating USUAFs

- City of Mesa Arts & Culture Department- Mesa, Arizona
- Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture- Phoenix, Arizona
- Tucson Pima Arts Council- Tucson, Arizona
- Anaheim Arts Council- Anaheim, California
- Arts Council for Long Beach- Long Beach, California
- Arts Council of Kern- Bakersfield, California
- Arts Orange County- Santa Ana, California
- City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department- Los Angeles, California
- City of Oakland Cultural Arts & Marketing- Oakland, California
- City of Riverside, Museum & Cultural Affairs- Riverside, California
- City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture- San Diego, California
- City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs- San Jose, California
- Fresno Arts Council- Fresno, California (short survey)
- Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission- Sacramento, California
- San Francisco Arts Commission- San Francisco, California
- Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region- Colorado Springs, Colorado
- Denver Arts & Venues- Denver, Colorado
- DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities- Washington, District of Columbia
- Arts Council of Hillsborough County- Tampa, Florida
- Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville- Jacksonville, Florida
- Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs- Miami, Florida
- City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs- Atlanta, Georgia
- Honolulu Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts- Honolulu, Hawaii
- Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events- Chicago, Illinois
- Arts Council of Indianapolis- Indianapolis, Indiana
- City of Wichita Division of Arts & Cultural Services- Wichita, Kansas
- Louisville Fund for the Arts- Louisville, Kentucky
- Arts Council of New Orleans- New Orleans, Louisiana
- Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts- Baltimore, Maryland

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- Mayor's Office of Arts, Tourism & Special Events- Boston, Massachusetts
- CultureSource- Detroit, Michigan
- Metropolitan Regional Arts Council- Saint Paul, Minnesota
- Arts KC - Regional Arts Council- Kansas City, Missouri
- St. Louis Regional Arts Commission- Saint Louis, Missouri
- City of Las Vegas Office of Cultural Affairs- Las Vegas, Nevada
- City of Albuquerque Cultural Services Department- Albuquerque, New Mexico
- New York City Department of Cultural Affairs- New York, New York
- Arts & Science Council of Charlotte/Mecklenburg- Charlotte, North Carolina
- Office of Raleigh Arts- Raleigh, North Carolina
- Cuyahoga Arts & Culture- Cleveland, Ohio
- Greater Columbus Arts Council- Columbus, Ohio
- Arts Council Oklahoma City- Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- Regional Arts and Culture Council- Portland, Oregon
- Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- ArtsMemphis- Memphis, Tennessee
- Metro Nashville Arts Commission- Nashville, Tennessee
- Arts Council of Fort Worth- Fort Worth, Texas
- City of Austin Cultural Arts Division / Economic Development Department- Austin, Texas
- City of Corpus Christi Arts & Cultural Commission- Corpus Christi, Texas
- City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs- Dallas, Texas
- City of El Paso Museums & Cultural Affairs Dept.- El Paso, Texas
- Houston Arts Alliance- Houston, Texas
- San Antonio Dept. for Culture & Creative Dev.- San Antonio, Texas
- City of Virginia Beach Office of Cultural Affairs- Virginia Beach, Virginia
- City of Seattle, Office of Arts & Culture- Seattle, Washington
- Creative Alliance Milwaukee- Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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2015 LAA Census USUAF Overview

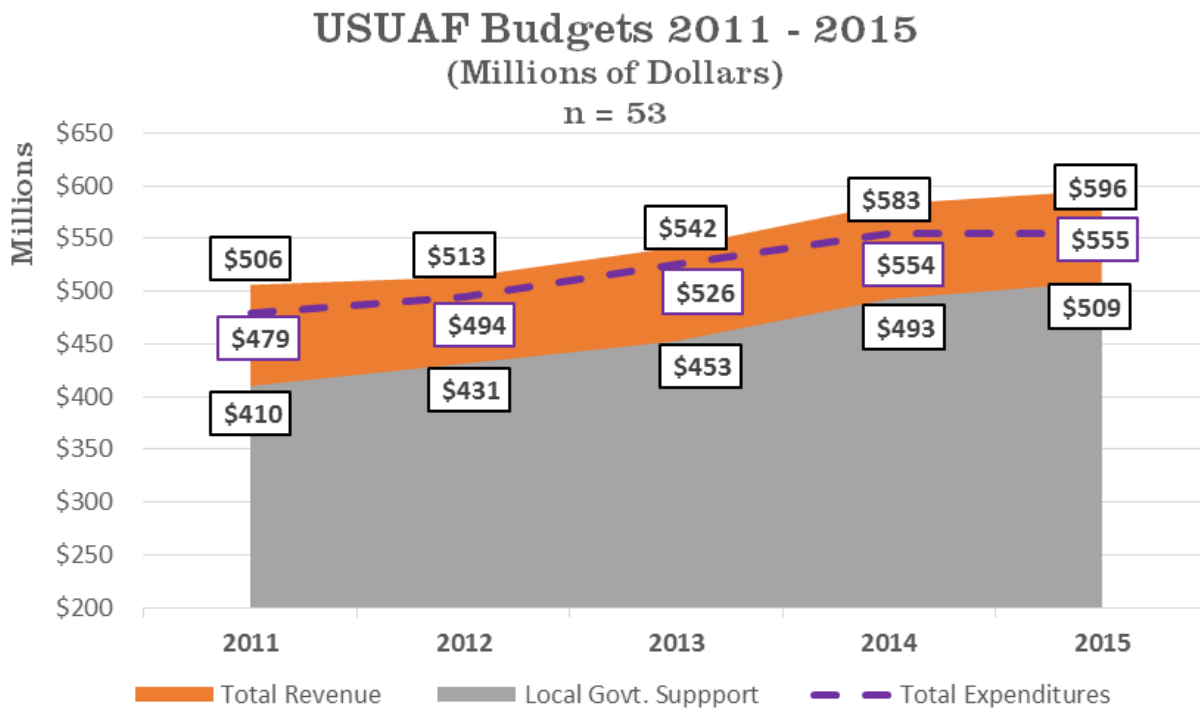
- Legal Status: 57 percent of USUAFs are public agencies, 43 percent are private, nonprofit organizations.
 - Of the public agencies, 75 percent are part of the city government, 13 percent of a unified city/county, and 6 percent each for county government and other.
 - Within city government, USUAF are most commonly an independent agency, or operating under the umbrella of the City Manager (25 percent each), under Economic Development (17 percent), Mayor's Office (13 percent), Parks and Recreation (8 percent), Community Development (4 percent), and other (8 percent).
- Population: They serve areas ranging from 315,000 at the City of Corpus Christi Arts & Cultural Commission, to almost 8.5 million at the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.
- Budgets: In 2015, estimated expenditures ranged from \$48,195 at the Anaheim Arts Council, to \$164 million at the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. After NYC, the USUAF with the second largest expenditures was the City of Albuquerque Cultural Services Department with a budget of \$38.5 million.
- Staff: 96 percent of all USUAFs have at least one full-time paid year round staff member. The average number of employees and volunteers for these LAAs is 60, while the median is 13.
- Board: 93 percent are overseen by a board of directors or a commission. The average size of a USUAF board is 21 members, and the median is 16.
- Partnerships: 96 percent partner with other community organizations such as Convention and Tourism Bureaus (87 percent), Parks and Recreation departments (85 percent), and Libraries (75 percent). 89 percent have 3 or more partnerships and 66 percent have five or more.
- Public Art: 71 percent operate a public art program; an additional 11 percent indicate interest in starting one.
- Grantmaking: 87 percent are grantmakers--62 percent give to both organizations and individual artists, and 25 percent to organizations only.

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USUAF Budgets

Aggregate revenues for the 53 responding USUAFs who provided budget history was \$596 million in 2015, and their total expenses were \$555 million. This was the fourth consecutive year of growth in total budgets and local government support.

- At the end of their last fiscal year, the majority of USUAFs had surpluses (47 percent) or break even budgets (40 percent), while only about a one-in-ten (13 percent) reported more expenses than revenues.
- Between 2014 and 2015, 74 percent of USUAFs had level or increased budgets.
- In 2015, arts funding from local government sources (city and/or county) grew for the fourth consecutive year to \$509 million.



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USUAF Sources of Revenue

	ALL LAAS	USUAFS	PUBLIC USUAFS	PRIVATE USUAFS
Earned Income	23%	12%	10%	16%
Private Sector Contributions	26%	19%	4%	39%
Government Support (Local)	21%	47%	63%	25%
Government Support (Other)	22%	18%	19%	15%
In-kind/Miscellaneous	9%	4%	4%	4%

USUAFs receive 65 percent of their revenue from government sources; 47 percent directly from their city government, and 18 percent from other government levels such as county, state or federal entities. Private sector contributions represent 19 percent of USUAF revenue while earned income accounts for 12 percent, and In-kind and miscellaneous 4 percent.

USUAF Expenditures

EXPENDITURES	ALL LAAS	USUAFS	PUBLIC USUAFS	PRIVATE USUAFS
Payroll expenses	30%	28%	26%	30%
Grants / contracts	22%	36%	37%	35%
Fund-raising (all fund-raising-related expenses)	3%	2%	0%	5%
Advertising, marketing, and promotion	5%	2%	1%	2%
Public art (planning, development, installation, and maintenance)	4%	5%	7%	2%
Cultural facility management	3%	6%	9%	0%
Administrative overhead (e.g., rent, utilities, supplies)	9%	8%	8%	7%
Delivery of programs and/or services	9%	8%	5%	13%
Cultural programming	10%	5%	5%	4%
Others / miscellaneous / not listed above	5%	1%	1%	2%

Spending by USUAFs mostly mirrors other local arts agencies, but they allocate a larger share of their money to grants (36 percent) compared to all LAAs (22 percent), USUAFs also spend a smaller portion of their budget on direct cultural programming (10 percent for all LAAs, 5 percent for USUAFs only).

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USUAF Demographics

Almost half of USUAFs (47 percent) agree that their organization has an appropriate level of diversity among staff, board, and volunteers. Thirty-six percent disagree, and 16 percent had a neutral opinion. USUAFs are more diverse than LAAs as a whole. At the average USUAF, 68 percent of the board is white, 42 percent is female and 72 percent is over the age of 44. Similarly, at the average USUAF 65 percent of staff is white, 67 percent is female, and 51 percent is over the age of 44. USUAFs are also more likely to be majority-minority than LAAs as a whole.

Demographic Composition of the Average LAA and the average USUAF¹

BOARD	NON-HISPANIC WHITE	FEMALE	OVER 44
All LAAs	85%	59%	77%
USUAFs	68%	48%	72%
STAFF (PAID AND VOLUNTEER)	NON-HISPANIC WHITE	FEMALE	OVER 44
All LAAs	83%	74%	57%
USUAFs	65%	67%	51%

Demographic Composition of LAA and USUAF Boards and Staff

	USUAFS	ALL LAAS	SERVICE AREA POPULATION ALL LAAS		
			Less than 100,000	100,000 to 999,999	1,000,000+
Boards					
100% Non-Hispanic White	6%	34%	49%	28%	4%
50% or more Non-Hispanic White	81%	95%	95%	96%	89%
Less than 50% Non-Hispanic White	19%	5%	5%	4%	11%
	USUAFS	ALL LAAS	SIZE OF LAA WORKFORCE		
Year Round Staff (paid and volunteer)			1 staff	2 staff	3 or more staff
100% Non-Hispanic White	7%	51%	86%	77%	36%
50% or more Non-Hispanic White	81%	91%	86%	99%	90%
Less than 50% Non-Hispanic White	19%	9%	14%	1%	10%

¹ “The average LAA” means percentages were calculated first individually and then averaged for all LAAs (and USUAFs) to avoid assigning more weight to organizations with larger staffs, budgets etc.

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Partnerships

USUAFs work with a broad range of organizations across their communities. 96 percent maintain at least one partnership with a community agency or organization, and 89 percent have three or more ongoing collaborations. These partnerships provide new opportunities for artists and arts organizations, bring cultural experiences closer to the public in traditional and non-traditional arts venues. Partnership can take many forms. USUAF respondents characterized their partnerships using five categories:

- 87 percent have “informal conversations” with a partner organization (80 percent talk with three or more)
- 75 percent “meet regularly” with a partner organization (53 percent meet with three or more)
- 87 percent “work together to plan, fund, and implement programs” (69 percent work jointly with three or more)
- 64 percent fund a partner “through grants or contracts” (49 percent fund three or more)
- 60 percent have a partner that has fully “integrated the arts into their initiatives” (40 percent have three or more).

USUAF Partnerships with Community Organizations

	ANY	TALK	MEET	WORK TOGETHER	FUND THEM	INTEGRATED THE ARTS
Convention and Tourism Bureau	84%	39%	37%	43%	13%	22%
Museums	84%	22%	37%	46%	52%	33%
Parks and Recreation Department	82%	29%	40%	64%	22%	40%
Local arts agencies in other cities/states	76%	45%	45%	26%	2%	10%
Colleges / universities / higher education	75%	34%	15%	51%	29%	22%
Libraries	73%	35%	25%	60%	20%	28%
Community-based education organizations	67%	41%	27%	38%	43%	24%
School districts	67%	38%	27%	51%	19%	24%
Historical societies	65%	42%	25%	28%	39%	14%
Chamber of Commerce	64%	57%	31%	26%	3%	14%
Community development agencies	64%	43%	23%	46%	11%	20%
Economic development agencies	64%	46%	29%	40%	9%	23%

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	ANY	TALK	MEET	WORK TOGETHER	FUND THEM	INTEGRATED THE ARTS
Cultural districts	62%	29%	32%	50%	41%	44%
Schools	62%	41%	18%	44%	24%	15%
Humanities organizations	56%	32%	32%	39%	35%	13%
Film commission	55%	53%	20%	30%	23%	20%
Sister Cities	47%	58%	23%	38%	12%	8%
Transportation agencies / organizations	44%	38%	38%	58%	8%	38%
Airports / aviation	42%	35%	13%	65%	4%	57%
Main Street Associations / programs	42%	30%	35%	48%	35%	30%
Housing agencies / organizations	36%	40%	25%	35%	15%	10%
Entrepreneurial centers	35%	63%	26%	26%	5%	5%
Boys and Girls Club(s)	31%	41%	0%	6%	35%	24%
Economic Development Corporation	31%	24%	41%	47%	0%	29%
Faith-based organizations	29%	56%	13%	25%	13%	6%
Social service departments	29%	50%	19%	13%	19%	13%
Small Business Development Centers	27%	67%	47%	33%	0%	13%
Healthcare providers	25%	57%	7%	29%	7%	29%
Environmental agencies	24%	69%	0%	23%	8%	8%
Law enforcement -- juvenile justice	24%	38%	31%	54%	8%	23%
YMCA / YWCA	24%	46%	23%	23%	15%	15%
Professional associations (e.g., realtors)	22%	75%	8%	17%	0%	0%
Bookstores	20%	55%	0%	36%	9%	9%
State and national parks	20%	64%	9%	36%	9%	18%
Immigration agencies	18%	50%	10%	30%	10%	0%
Agricultural Extension Service(s)	9%	60%	20%	40%	20%	40%
Law enforcement -- corrections / prisons	9%	60%	0%	20%	20%	0%
Other / Miscellaneous / Not listed above	16%	56%	44%	56%	44%	44%

¹ First column to the left represents the percentage of USUAFs that indicated at least one partnership at any level. For example, 84 percent of USUAFs partner with Convention and Tourism Bureaus, of those, 37 percent meet regularly, and 22 percent have a partner that has integrated the arts into their initiatives.

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Grantmaking

Eighty-seven percent of USUAFs are grantmakers: 62 percent give to both organizations and individual artists, and 25 percent to organizations only.

- 40 percent of grantmaking USUAFs provide funding to organizations who do not have official 501(c)(3) nonprofit status
- 65 percent have funding programs that require the recipient of the funds to demonstrate diversity in at least one area, most frequently in the audience being served (42 percent), and the board composition of the organization (40 percent).

When choosing the participants in funding review panels, 94 percent of USUAFs consider diversity--75 percent informally, and 19 percent through a written policy. Additionally, 87 percent of USUAFs require—for at least one of their funding programs—that panels consider the issue of diversity when making funding decisions; most of them do so through informal considerations (60 percent), and the rest have a written policy (27 percent).

USUAF Grants by the Numbers

- USUAFs received 9,247 funding requests from organizations during their last fiscal year. Of those, 28 percent received no funding, 41 percent partial funding, and 31 received full funding.
- The requests received by USUAFs from organizations totaled \$289.5million, of which they awarded \$162.1 million (56 percent), the award amounts ranged from \$200 to \$25 million.
- USUAFs received 4,145 funding requests from individuals, of those, 68 percent received no funding, 10 percent received partial funding, and 22 percent received full funding.
- These requests totaled \$28 million, and \$4.4 million (16 percent) were awarded. Awards to individual artists ranged from \$4,500 to \$33,300.
- Most grantmaking dollars at USUAFs come from government sources. Grants to individuals, however, are more likely to be funded by private contributions than grants to organizations (25 percent individuals, 14 percent organizations).

USUAF Grantmaking Expenditures
total \$166.5 million



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Public Art

Seventy-one percent of USUAFs operate a public art program. Of those, 79 percent have at least one dedicated full-time employee specifically for their public art program, 36 percent hire external paid help, and 21 percent work directly with public art practitioners such as administrators, artists, and planners.

Seventy-seven percent of public art programs operated by USUAFs receive funding from a percent-for-art ordinance or policy, 67 percent receive funds from other government sources. Twenty-six percent are involved in developing public art in educational settings and 59 percent offer public art tours to the general public in their community.

Public Art Supported by USUAFs

71 PERCENT OPERATE A PUBLIC ART PROGRAM	
Of those, they work with...	
Three-dimensional work (e.g., sculpture, bas-relief, statues)	92%
Two-dimensional work (e.g., murals, mosaics, terrazzo, photography)	87%
Site-specific integrated artwork (e.g., landscape architecture, environmental sculpture)	85%
Temporary installations	74%
Multi-media / new technology (e.g., light art, projections, video, audio)	56%
Art-based street fairs and/or festivals	36%
Performance, time-based artwork (e.g., music, theater, dance, spoken word)	36%

Public art Funding Sources at USUAFs

FUNDING SOURCES	
Percent-for-art ordinance/policy	77%
Revenue from government sources	67%
General operating support	44%
Grants from foundations	28%
Cash contributions from private businesses	18%
Public art in private development ordinance/policy	15%
Cash contributions from individuals	13%

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Looking to the future

When asked about the financial outlook of their organizations, USUAF leaders forecasted a period of stability: 65 percent described their financial outlook for 2016 as “about the same as it is in 2015.” Of those who anticipated a change, 18 percent said it would be easier and 16 percent it would be more difficult. Similarly, the majority of USUAF leaders (56 percent) believe their organization has the correct mix of financial resources, while 16 percent had a neutral opinion, and 27 percent disagreed.

USUAF leaders also feel optimistic about the stability of their funding sources over the next three years. For example, 48 percent anticipated an increase in local government funding, compared to 37 percent who thought there would be no change, and 15 percent who thought it would decrease. An even larger proportion anticipated growth in earned revenue (58 percent), 40 percent anticipated no change in earned revenue, and 2 percent predicted a decrease.

Regarding the services they provide, only 22 percent of USUAF leaders felt increased competition. This was most commonly by another arts organization or arts service organization (15 percent). Three-quarters of USUAFs anticipated demand for their services would increase in 2016, and 25 percent thought it would stay the same. No one anticipated a decrease in demand for their services.

USUAFs remain at the forefront of ensuring the arts have a vital presence in the nation’s largest cities—strengthening their arts industries, ensuring equity and access for the public, and connecting the arts to the pressing issues of our times. While the “how” is different for all of them, the “why” always remains: All the arts for all the people.

This report was written by Graciela Kahn, Randy Cohen, and Ben Davidson. The Local Arts Agency Census was funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. To learn more about the Local Arts Agency Census and download topic reports please visit: www.AmericansForTheArts.org/LAACensus

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About Americans for the Arts

Americans for the Arts is the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. For more than 50 years, it has been dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. From offices in Washington, D.C., and New York City, it serves more than 150,000 organizational and individual members and stakeholders.

Americans for the Arts is focused on four primary goals:

1. Lead and serve individuals and organizations to help build environments in which the arts and arts education thrive and contribute to more vibrant and creative communities.
2. Generate meaningful public and private sector policies and more leaders and resources for the arts and arts education.
3. Build individual awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts and arts education.
4. Ensure the operational stability of the organization and its ability to creatively respond to opportunities and challenges.

To achieve its goals, Americans for the Arts partners with local, state, and national arts organizations; government agencies; business leaders; individual philanthropists; educators; and funders throughout the country. It provides extensive arts-industry research and professional development opportunities for community arts leaders via specialized programs and services, including a content-rich website and an annual national convention.

Local arts agencies throughout the United States comprise Americans for the Arts' core constituency. A variety of unique partner networks with particular interests such as public art, united arts fundraising, arts education, and emerging arts leaders are also supported.

Through national visibility campaigns and local outreach, Americans for the Arts strives to motivate and mobilize opinion leaders and decision-makers who can make the arts thrive in America. Americans for the Arts produces annual events that heighten national visibility for the arts, including the National Arts Awards and BCA TEN honoring private-sector leadership and the Public Leadership in the Arts Awards (in cooperation with The United States Conference of Mayors) honoring elected officials in local, state,

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and federal government.

Americans for the Arts also hosts Arts Advocacy Day annually on Capitol Hill, convening arts advocates from across the country to advance federal support of the arts, humanities, and arts education.

For more information about Americans for the Arts, please visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org