

A NATIONAL, COORDINATED CALL TO ACTION

July 9, 2025

WHO

The Cultural Advocacy Group (CAG) is a collaborative working group of national, state, and regional arts and culture organizations working cooperatively to advance pro-arts policies at the federal level.

WHAT

We invite America's arts and cultural organizations, artists, audiences, advocates and stakeholders to urgently amplify their voices in support of federal investments in the arts and humanities. Specifically, we encourage arts and humanities advocates to lend their voices to advance FY 2026 Congressional appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) during this time of unprecedented policy change. These federal agencies have earned bipartisan support from Congress, and invest in America by making state and local grants available for arts and humanities programming in all communities. These investments help keep community based arts and humanities programming available and affordable for the public.

WHEN

All those who care about arts and humanities programming for communities across America are needed to engage in the public policy process during the months of **JULY, AUGUST and SEPTEMBER** as decisions about FY26 funding are made. Engagement is important, and it can be easy; find out how below.

WHY

When America's arts and cultural organizations, artists, audiences, advocates and stakeholders raise their voices together in support of federal investments in the arts and humanities, our collective power is deepened. This summer Congress is engaging in the critical work of appropriating budgets to meet federal policy goals, and when they do, the arts and humanities must continue to be included. It is important for members of Congress to hear your voices as they allocate appropriations for the NEA, NEH and IMLS.

HOW

Use your voice in support of the arts and humanities by contacting your members of Congress. The key messages below can be used to help you shape your own message to lawmakers. Consider adding your personal story about the importance of arts and humanities programming in your community.

Key Messages for Congress:

Continue bipartisan support to sustain and protect current funding for the NEA, NEH and IMLS. Within the Interior appropriations bill, allocate \$209 million each for the NEA and NEH for FY 2026. Allocate \$294.8 million for IMLS for FY 2026 within the Labor, Health and Education appropriations bill.

The arts and cultural production boost economic productivity. They fuel a strong economy on main street and all across our nation. The creative industries account for 4.2% of the U.S. gross domestic product, and they employ 5.4 million workers. The arts and cultural production reinforce America's leadership in the global economy too, as cultural exports represent a \$36.8 billion trade surplus.

The arts and humanities improve education outcomes. Students who study them have better attendance, lower dropout rates, and higher scores on standardized math and reading tests.

The arts and humanities foster civic cohesion. People who participate in the arts and humanities are more likely to be engaged within their communities; they're more likely to vote, be volunteers and be civically engaged in a variety of ways.

The arts and humanities facilitate good health. The arts and humanities are used in many clinical settings to help address physical and mental health conditions. Active Duty members of the military and Veterans count on creative therapies to successfully reduce symptoms of traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress, and chronic pain. Creative aging programs help older adults live healthier lives.

The arts and humanities preserve our cherished heritage and traditions. They foster a shared sense of place, where people want to live, work, and raise families. They help instill community pride and preserve our traditions for future generations.

Where to contact your member of Congress:

[Representatives](#)

[Senators](#)

After reaching out to Congress, please consider reinforcing your messages online. When you do so, use any or all of the following hashtags:

#AudiencesSupportTheArts&Humanities!

#ARTisattheHEARTofbipARTisan!

#FromTheHeartlandtotheHill,ARTSupportisEVERYWHERE!

#We'reLOCALandWe'reVOCALfortheARTS!

PLEASE NOTE

The following organizations support this Call to Action:

4A Arts - American Alliance of Artists and Audiences

American Alliance of Museums

American Circus Alliance

Americans for the Arts

Arts Alliance Illinois

Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS)

Arts North Carolina

ArtsKC - Regional Arts Council

Association of Art Museum Directors

Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP)

CA Arts Advocates

Chorus America

Community of Literary Magazines and Presses (CLMP)

Craft Emergency Relief Fund (CERF+)

Create Wisconsin

Creative Ohio

Creative West

Cultural Advocacy Coalition of Oregon

Cultural Alliance of Maine

Dance/NYC

Dance/USA

Early Music America

Federation of State Humanities Councils

Folk Alliance International

Fractured Atlas

Inspire Washington

International Society for the Performing Arts

Kentuckians for the Arts

League of American Orchestras

LitNet

Local Learning: The National Network for Folk Arts in Education

Louisiana Partnership for the Arts

Mid-America Arts Alliance

National Alliance for Musical Theatre

National Art Education Association

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

National Association for Music Education

National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response (NCAPER)

National Guild for Community Arts Education

National Performance Network

New England Foundation for the Arts

OPERA America

PEN America

Performing Arts Venues Alliance (PAVA)

South Arts

South Carolina Arts Alliance

Texans for the Arts

Theatre Communications Group

Vermont Creative Network

Willamette University