

**Arkansas Arts Council
Strategic Plan
January 1, 2006 – December 31, 2010**

Arkansas Arts Council Strategic Plan 2006-2010

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Arkansas Arts Council Strategic Plan 2006-2010

An agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage
preserving and enhancing the heritage of Arkansas

Established in 1971 to develop and implement a coordinated and comprehensive
statewide program of support for the arts in Arkansas

Mission Statement

The Arkansas Arts Council will advance and empower the arts for the benefit of all
Arkansans.

Vision

The Arkansas Arts Council, in collaboration with its constituents and strategic partners,
will increase awareness of and appreciation for the quality of arts produced and presented
in Arkansas.

Goals

Goal 1. Encourage artistic excellence, diversity and innovation

Goal 2. Promote equitable access to the arts for all Arkansans

Goal 3. Develop arts in education for life-long learning

Goal 4. Enhance community cultural and economic development

**Goal 5. Build and sustain the capacity of the Arkansas Arts Council to fulfill
its mission**

Strategic Plan: Goals and Objectives

Goal 1. Encourage artistic excellence, diversity and innovation

Objectives

1.1 **Constituent capacity building** Provide capacity-building assistance to nonprofit arts organizations and artists with training, consulting, information, networking, communications, and convening.

Strategies

- **Stress capacity-building** The Arts Council will stress comprehensive capacity building including: funding, training, consulting, information, and convening functions. Over the long term, the Council will evaluate if a focusing of resources toward capacity-building services best serves the citizens and constituents.
- **ArtLinks** Organize regional conferences in 2006 and a statewide conference in Rogers in 2007. Evaluate this format and consider alternating statewide and regional conferences.
- **Information** Provide information on the Arts Council web site, newsletter, enews, and in state and regional gatherings.
- **Training** Offer nonprofit management training at Arts Council conferences, through grants-writing workshops, regionally in cooperation with regional partners, and refer constituents to training provided by colleges and nonprofit management service organizations. Offer or find other providers for training asked for by constituents. Survey results of nonprofit organization very important and important needs in order of priority:
 1. Programming funds
 2. Operating funds
 3. Help with funding
 4. Help with marketing/audience development
 5. Public information/advocacy
 6. Information
 7. Board development
 8. Volunteer development
 9. Networking
 10. Staff development
- **Consulting** Arts Council staff will continue to provide direct assistance through phone and on-site consulting. Consider a peer advising program to recruit and train experienced Arkansas cultural professionals to mentor their peers.
- **Leadership development** Work with Chambers of Commerce and Higher Education institutions to provide training and certification; provide scholarships as funds become available.
- **Assistance fund grants** As funds are available, restore grants for

constituents to plan for their own capacity building with trainers, consultants, scholarships to conferences, or travel to learn from other nonprofits.

1.2 Grants programs Maintain grant programs to provide funding for general operations, major arts partners, projects, Expansion Arts, and Arts in Education.

Strategies

- **General Operating Support** Offer grants for operations to established, professionally managed, nonprofit arts organizations.
 - Continue to streamline grants and grant procedures.
 - In 2006 shift more funds to GOS; stipulate that organizations receiving GOS funds may not also receive project grants (but may receive Arts in Education grants).
- **Project Support** Offer project grants to support contracted costs to present specific arts events.
- **Major Arts Partners** Provide funding for general operations and arts in education to organizations with three-year average budgets of \$1 million or greater. Eliminate Major Arts Initiative Laboratory to shift funding to general operating expenditures.
- **Expansion Arts** Provide funding for a part-time executive director for up to a three-year period to organizations that had been all-volunteer. Additionally provide capacity building advice and training to the director and board members of each organization.
- **Arts in Education** (see goal 3)

1.3 Artist services Encourage and assist artists to achieve standards of professional excellence.

Strategies

- **Individual Artist Fellowships** Award annual fellowships to individual literary, performing, and visual artists in recognition of their artistic accomplishments.
- **Arkansas Artists Registry** Maintain the registry as a comprehensive archive of visual arts to document and promote art produced in Arkansas.
- **Information and Training** – Provide online and print information and offer training or identify other providers of training for priority needs identified by Arkansas artists. Artists cited these needs in order of importance:
 1. Networking with others with similar interests
 2. Marketing
 3. Information
 4. Validation of my work
 5. Increased sales or other earnings
 6. Finding equipment, materials or supplies
 7. Access to exhibition space
 8. Access to grant funding
 9. Training or assistance in business
 10. Training or assistance in creative skills
 11. Health and business insurance

- **Networking and convening** Establish a constituents list serve to enable artists and cultural workers to readily communicate. Create opportunities for artists to gather for information sharing and networking with regional partners. Continue to offer professional development tracks for artists at statewide and regional conferences
- **Arkansas Living Treasure** Continue to recognize the excellence of Arkansas Traditional Craft Artists.

1.4 Strategic partnerships Work in partnership with agencies and organizations with complementary interests and resources.

- **ASU folklife program**
- **Mid-America Arts Alliance museums funding initiative**
- **Regional tourism agencies**
- **Department of Parks and Tourism**
- **Literacy Council**
- **Humanities Council**
- **Department of Economic Development/Film Commission**
- **Arkansas Science and Technology Authority**
- **Department of Education**
- **A+ Schools**

1.5 Arts on Tour Program and Roster Maintain a juried roster (AOT) of professional performing and visual artists available for performances or exhibitions anywhere in Arkansas.

1.6 Small Works on Paper Showcase the best of Arkansas visual arts with an annual, juried exhibition that tours statewide.

1.7 Diversity Maintain the Arts Council's leadership to encourage arts leadership, staffing, programming, and audiences that represent Arkansas's growing diversity.

1.8 Public Art Programs As funds become available, reinstate public art grants and work to make the percent for art program mandatory for state-owned buildings.

1.9 Governor's Arts Awards Continue the annual Governor's Arts Awards to annually recognize individuals and corporations for their support of the arts.

Goal 2. Promote equitable access to the arts for all Arkansans

Objectives

2.1 Advocacy Revive a citizen-based arts advocacy organization so that Arkansas arts advocates can help all Arkansans have access to the arts through increased support for the arts at local, state, and federal levels.

Strategies

- Appoint a Council committee to coordinate Council member advocacy with constituents, partners, and legislators.
- Revive Arkansans for the Arts as a corporate entity that can organize and sponsor advocacy communications through constituents.
- Increase Arkansas Arts Council visibility (see goal 5).
- Explore the feasibility of Arkansans for the Arts hiring a professional lobbyist financed through private-sector funding.
- Work with the Governor's office to coordinate education and arts advocacy, possibly by creating a non-profit education and arts advocacy organization.
- Identify regional partners and help build their capacity to advocate for local, state and federal arts support (see regional collaborations objective below).
- Require grant recipients to publicly acknowledge state funding through the AAC and to communicate directly with elected officials thanking them for public funds.
- Inform legislators of grants made to their constituents.
- Integrate an expectation of advocacy into the recruitment, orientation, and training of Expansion Arts organizations.
- Create advocacy tool kits with fact sheets and talking points to help constituents and Council members explain public benefits of arts support.
- Create links on the AAC web site to advocacy information provided by NASAA and Americans for the Arts.
- Gather and report economic impact data from collected GOS reports (see goal 4).
- Offer a biennial legislative lunch sponsored by corporate partners and regional arts partners, and hosted by Council members.

2.2 Regional collaborations Establish regional partnerships to collaborate with the Arts Council and local constituents to create local and regional hubs for advocacy, information, and services.

Strategies

- Identify arts councils, arts service organizations, or civic organizations such as tourism agencies to become formal, regional partners with the Arkansas Arts Councils. Partners may be agencies like the Northwest Arkansas Arts Council, TCAP, Little Rock Arts and Cultural Commission, etc.
- Regional partners may help gather and disseminate information, host regional meetings and training, and refer constituents to information and local and

regional resources.

- Talk with Parks and Tourism to determine which of the six regional tourism entities have potential to work with regional arts organizations (see goal 4).
- Build regional and local capacity to support cultural organizations to balance funding from among private and public, local and state sources.

2.3 Expansion Arts Continue the Expansion Arts Program that provides three-year salary assistance (with annually increasing cash matches) and capacity-building training and consulting for developing arts organizations that had been all volunteer.

Strategies

- Build opportunities for under-served regions of Arkansas by identifying community-based organizations with potential to participate in the next cycle.

2.4 Touring arts The Arts on Tour program is designed both to promote excellence and access to the arts. See goal 1.

Strategies

- Offer touring artist training.
- Continue to identify and recruit artists who will increase the diversity of programs offered in the Arts on Tour roster.

2.5 Physical accessibility Lead statewide efforts to assure full accessibility to attend and participate in cultural opportunities and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Strategies

- Assist Independent Living Services in its effort to expand VSA arts services. Participate in monthly VSA conference calls.
- Identify local arts organizations with accessibility needs and provide technical assistance.
- Continue to monitor accessibility compliance of grantees.
- Continue to identify artists with disabilities, assess needs, and provide assistance. Convene regional follow-up meetings of 2005 VSA forum participants (artist representatives and service providers).

Goal 3. Develop arts in education for life-long learning

Objectives

3.1 In-School Residency Grants Continue to offer grants to Arkansas schools to place professional artists in residencies during the school day.

Strategies

- Coordinate with schools, the Arkansas Department of Education, regional educational cooperatives, and with other community organizations.

3.2 After School/Summer Residency Grants Provide grants to community organizations or local government agencies to place professional Arkansas artists in residencies out of school.

3.3 Arts in Education Curriculum Project Grants Provide grants for projects that integrate the arts into the basic school curriculum serving K-12 students, adult, and/or special constituents.

3.4 Arts in Education Mini Residency Grants Provide grants for short-term residencies for schools and communities using artists from the AIE artist roster.

3.5 Arts in Education Artist Roster Maintain a public listing of panel-reviewed artists eligible to coordinate AIE residencies. Continue to expand the number and diversity of disciplines and participating artists offered through the AIE roster.

3.6 Information Provide information on opportunities and best practices to improve arts education.

3.7 Advocacy Continue to advocate for state and local public policies that integrate the arts into the education of Arkansas students.

3.8 Professional development Provide professional development instruction and assistance to teachers, teaching artists, and community arts educators.

Strategies

- **ACT 245 implementation** Encourage schools to implement ACT 245 requiring 40 minutes of visual arts and 40 minutes of music in Arkansas elementary schools.
- **Arts in Education Retreat** Present an annual professional development retreat for teaching artists, classroom teachers and community organizations to integrate the arts into education.
- **Handbooks** Continue to develop handbooks and planning guides to assist teachers and teaching artists.
- **Arts in Education conferences and workshops.** Work with educational co-operatives to train teachers to integrate the arts into their classroom curricula.

3.9 Strategic partnerships Work with the Department of Education and professional associations of arts educators to implement AAC Arts in Education objectives. Continue partnership with A+ Arkansas Schools to place roster artists in A+ schools, and for selected roster artists to receive training as A+ faculty/mentors.

Goal 4. Enhance community cultural and economic development

Objectives

4.1 Creative economic development Assist Arkansas cultural organizations, which are increasingly working to strengthen arts and culture as an important economic sector, vital to local and state economy.

Strategies

- Identify the state's artists, cultural organizations, and creative industries as a creative sector.
- Disseminate a report from Americans for the Arts that maps and documents creative industries using Dunn and Bradstreet designations (available by legislative districts).
- Work with strategic partners such as the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority to strengthen the creative sector (see other strategic partnerships below).

4.2 Cultural tourism Work with Parks and Tourism to help Arkansas cultural organizations and events be more visible and accessible to visitors.

4.3 Strategic partnerships Work strategically with state and regional partners to advance AAC goals and to leverage additional funds.

Strategies

- Arkansas Science and Technology - proposal to the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation to assess and expand creative economy clusters
- Main Street Arkansas/Arkansas Delta Initiative ○ Provide assistance to the cultural heritage tourism project
- State Parks and Tourism
- Ozark Folk Center
- ASU ○ Folklife coordinator ○ continue NEA funded partnership to establish a statewide folklife program
- Arkansas Film Commission
- Department of Economic Development
- Representatives of the hospitality industry ○ facilitate cultural use of local hotel bed taxes
- Mid-America Arts Alliance ○ follow up the assessment of small and mid-sized Arkansas museums by submitting a proposal to Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation to address identified training needs.

4.4 Rural arts development Apply the AAC General Operating Support, Expansion Arts programs and regional partnerships to encourage rural arts development, especially in regions not well served by existing organizations.

Goal 5 Build and sustain the capacity of the Arkansas Arts Council to fulfill our mission.

Objectives:

5.1 Advocacy Establish systems to increase capacity of Arkansas citizens to advocate for support of the arts at the local, state, and federal levels. (see goal 2.1)

5.2 Visibility Enhance Arkansas Arts Council visibility with a consistent message, effective promotional materials, and regular communications to constituents and legislators.

Strategies

- Maintain high-visibility programs and services: Governor's Arts Awards, Arts on Tour, Arts in Education, etc.
- Work with the Department of Heritage's contracted public relations firm to communicate a consistent institutional identity, consistent with the Council's strategic plan.
- Update the AAC web site to stress benefits to constituents including: citizens, legislators, artists, nonprofit cultural organizations, and their partners.
- Create promotional materials: informational video, visual presentations, and talking points for Council members, regional partners, and staff.
- Encourage partners and constituents to create links on their web sites to the AAC.
- Require grantees to publicly acknowledge their AAC funding and submit proof (ads, news clippings, brochures, etc.) in their interim and final reports. Continue to supply clip art logos and text of crediting message for use in grantee publications and advertisements.

5.3 Funds development Secure increased appropriations and federal grants to meet increasing needs for support due to the successful development of local arts organizations.

Strategies

- Implement a policy that the Arkansas Arts Council will seek funds from private sector for support for statewide initiatives (not operations) that do not directly compete with nonprofit constituent organizations.
- Organize an AAC funds development committee to identify statewide initiatives and likely private-sector funders, e.g., SBC technology grant to establish a statewide electronic communications system among arts advocates or a foundation grant to establish staff capacity for Arkansas for the Arts.
- Help constituent organizations identify and gain funding from other sources: local self-improvement tax districts, hotel/motel bed taxes, foundation, NEA, etc.
- Advocate for increased private-sector philanthropy.

5.4 Council development Continue to recruit council members who can advise the Arts Council, communicate to constituents, and can actively participate in advocacy and funds development.

5.5 Professional development Arts Council staff and Council members will continue to participate in professional development.

5.6 Information technology The Council will enhance its capacity to communicate with constituents with updated web site, a constituent list serve, and use of data for planning, management, and advocacy.

Strategies

- Strengthen AAC information technology capacity to better use information and communication technologies.
- Expand and update constituent listservs.
- Expand email database and use of e-news to frequently update constituents to opportunities and maintain AAC visibility.
- Explore feasibility of issuing an RFP to grant/contract with a regional partner to host a statewide calendar of cultural events and opportunities.
- Put more AAC publications, guidelines, handbooks, planning templates, etc. online.
- Mine AAC data on organizations, budgets and audiences to identify trends and economic impact of the cultural sector (see goal 4).

5.7 Planning and evaluation The Council will monitor progress on this plan annually ó reporting the extent to which objectives have been fulfilled ó and will renew the plan with constituent assessment and strategic planning in 2009-2010.

Strategies

- **Annual review** The Council will annually review progress on planned objectives.
- **Program evaluation** Pick one major program annually for a comprehensive evaluation.
- **Cost benefit analysis** -Monitor AAC grants, programs, and services through this planning cycle to determine those that best advance AAC goals and how the AAC should focus its investments. Look for opportunities to build capacity for regional partners and constituents and increase local support.

5.8 Major project plans Program staff will develop annual Major Project plans, aligned with this strategic plan, which will be the basis of their annual performance reviews.