

2026 State Arts Agency Grant Making Facts

Percentage below Poverty: FY2015-2024

State Arts Agency Grant Making

State arts agencies (SAAs) serve constituents through numerous grants that bolster economic activity, individual artistry, educational success, community development, social engagement, well-being and quality of life.

How Do We Measure Grants across Poverty?

To understand how grants are distributed at a national level across census tracts, this fact sheet divides the census tracts into four equal quartiles based on the percentage of poverty. For this analysis, NASAA combined the middle two quartiles to show a "median" 50% of census tracts. The lowest and highest quartiles show distribution of grants and grant dollars to the 25% of census tracts with the lowest and highest percentages of poverty.

Why Examine Poverty?

State arts agencies hold a mandate to facilitate public access to arts and culture to all constituents. Examining how grants are distributed across communities with high levels of poverty provides a lens through which state arts agencies can understand who has historically received grants and where the greatest needs are present.

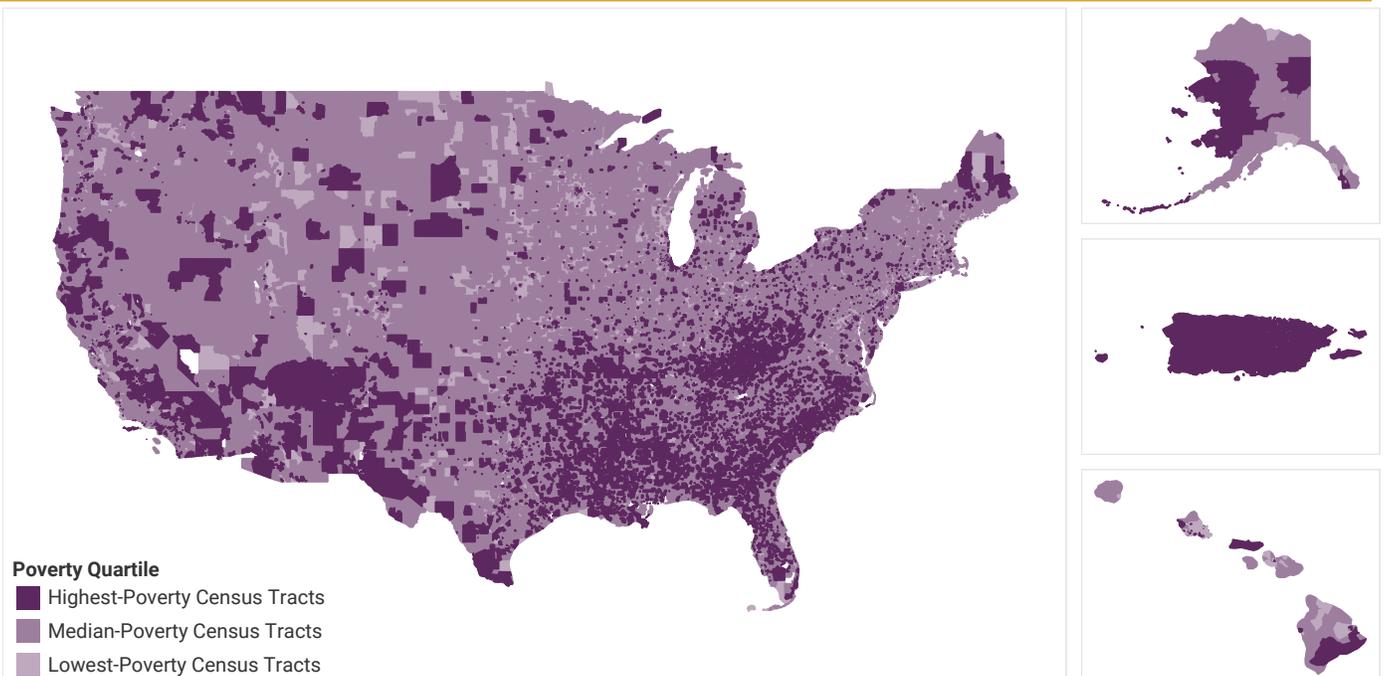
For this analysis, NASAA used geospatial software to identify the number of grants, total grant dollars, median award sizes and unique communities served across the three divisions of census tracts. Notably, the median award in communities with higher levels of poverty tends to be larger than awards made in other regions.

State Arts Agency Grants Distribution by Census Tract Poverty Data

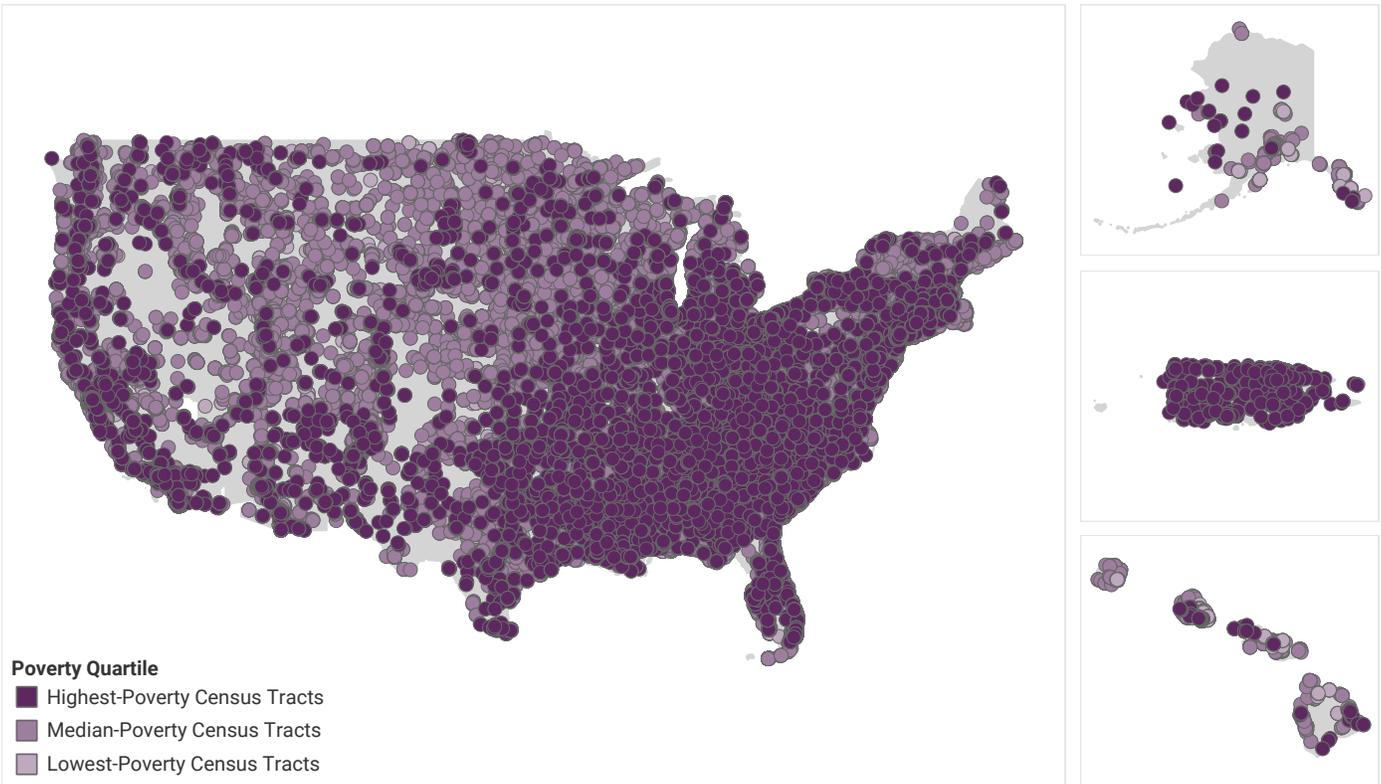
	Lowest-Poverty Census Tracts	Middle-Poverty Census Tracts	Highest-Poverty Census Tracts
Total Dollars Awarded	\$278,559,930	\$785,343,897	\$610,992,921
Percentage of All Grant Dollars	16.6%	46.9%	36.5%
Number of Grants Awarded	23,067	60,022	39,293
Share of All SAA Grants	18.8%	49.0%	32.1%
Median Award Size	\$4,500	\$5,000	\$5,404
Total Population	27.3%	50.6%	22.1%
Communities Served	9,302	19,603	10,511

Total Population includes all population in the census tracts regardless of grant status. Communities Served is based on unique census tracts receiving grants or grant locations.

Census Tracts by Poverty Quartile

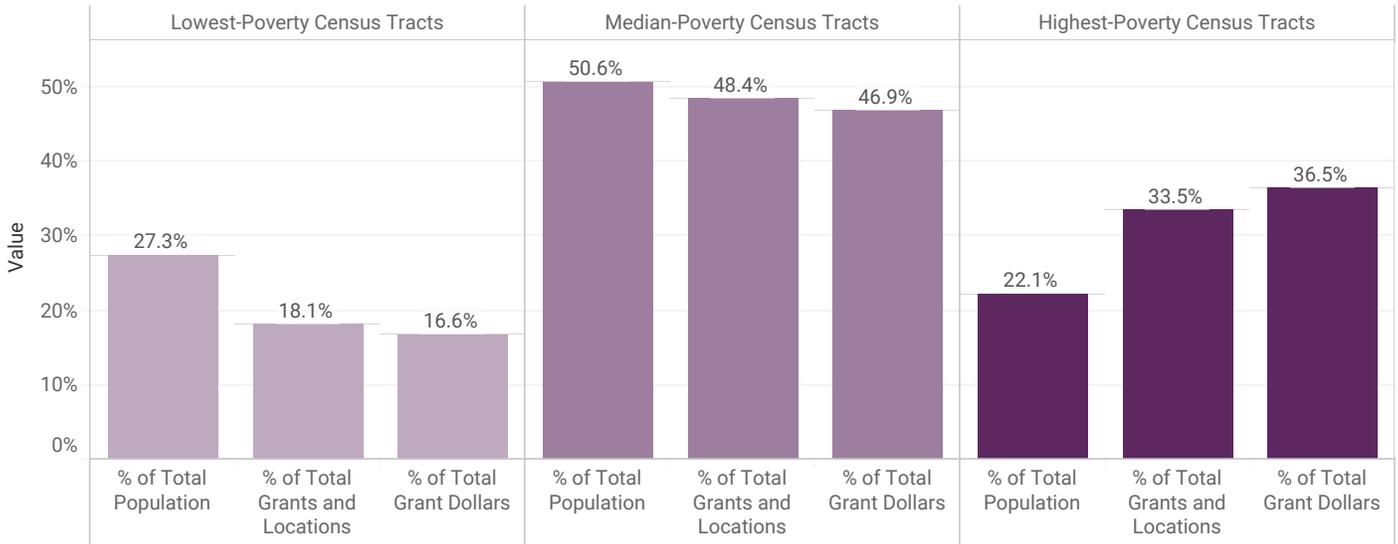


State Arts Agency Grants by Poverty Quartile



Grants by Census Tract Poverty Quartile

The graph below shows the percentage of awards and dollars located in each of the three census tract quartiles. The share of total population is also presented. The results indicate that the number of awards and total grant dollars have a greater proportional distribution in the highest-poverty census tracts.



The report draws on data from state arts agencies' Final Descriptive Reports of grant-making activity submitted annually to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and NASAA. Poverty data is drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey's 5-Year Estimates. Percents may not add to 100% due to null data or visualization restrictions. NASAA's collection of grant-making statistics is supported in part through a cooperative agreement with the NEA. For more information on the work of state arts agencies, call 202-347-6352, email nasaa@nasaa-arts.org or visit <https://nasaa-arts.org>.