

2011-2015 Strategic Plan

Raising Awareness of Arkansas's Creative Economy

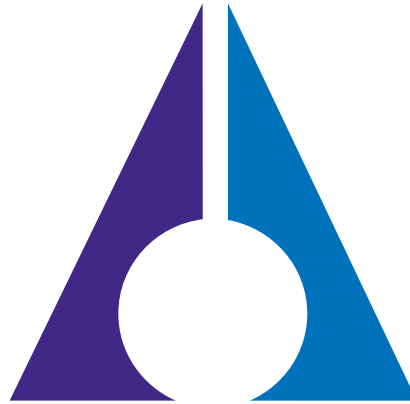


Arkansas Arts Council

an agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage



THE DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS
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Arkansas Arts Council

2011-2015 Strategic Plan:
Raising Awareness of
Arkansas's Creative Economy

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DESIGN IN RURAL AMERICA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Overview:

On January 1, 2010, the Arkansas Arts Council (AAC) began the development of a new strategic plan to lead the agency for the next five years. This new plan builds on the foundation set in place by a similar planning process performed in 2005. This new plan provides an update of the AAC's vision, mission, goals and objectives over the next five years. The following is a breakdown of the goals for the strategic planning process:

- 1.** Develop a new five-year action plan.
- 2.** Integrate metrics into strategic goals to better monitor the AAC's success.
- 3.** Inform Arkansans about the findings from the creative economy study.
- 4.** Grow the presence of the AAC among its agency partners, other agencies and policy makers throughout the state.

Planning Consultant:

To lead the strategic planning process, the AAC contracted with a new non-profit creative development firm based in Helena, Ark., called Thrive. Terrance Clark, co-director of Thrive, worked with key staff and council members to conduct a year-long planning process that resulted in a comprehensive online survey, regional meetings with constituents and two internal strategy meetings with the entire council.

Creative Economy Study:

As one of the primary focuses from the last five-year plan, the AAC worked with Regional Technology Strategies and Mt. Auburn Associates, with support from a grant through the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, from April 2007 to March 2009 to perform an assessment of Arkansas's creative economy. The study, resulting in four separate volumes, not only produced usable metrics about the creative economy of Arkansas (i.e., it is the third largest employer), it also generated a comprehensive list of strategic recommendations for state and regional leaders to consider in attempts to grow Arkansas's creative enterprise infrastructure (RTS, 2007-2009).

The centerpiece of the study was the recommendation to develop an advocacy group to provide additional

assistance to creative types and lobby for their cause to generate new incentives and policies. This advocacy group would be a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and act as a citizen-driven partner to the AAC, which would greatly expand the offerings and support to creatives in Arkansas. The creative economy advocacy group would focus on the five following goals:

1. Strengthen recognition of and support for Arkansas's creative economy within the state's economic development community.
2. Nurture the development of creative talent and the pipeline of creative workers.
3. Promote the growth and profitability of creative enterprises.
4. Utilize creative talent and assets to increase the competitiveness of other key clusters in Arkansas.
5. Support and expand the state's creative infrastructure.

Constituent Surveying:

To better understand constituent needs and dynamics, Thrive conducted an online survey during the summer months of 2010. The survey questioned more than 600 people from many different culture sectors (i.e., independent artists, art-related non-profits, government

employees, non-art related small businesses) to provide a comprehensive analysis of creative constituents in the state and the dynamic they play among other factors involved in economic and community development. As another measure of the AAC's work, the survey asked in-depth questions about programs offered through the agency and the quality of/ access to the arts in Arkansas.

Regional Meetings: The AAC conducted five regional meetings in the state (Little Rock, Texarkana, Bentonville, Van Buren/Fort Smith, and Helena) to inform constituents about the findings and recommendations from the creative economy study and to also gain further insight about the perception and needs of Arkansas's creative constituents. The information gathered in these public meetings was integral to the creation of the AAC's next five-year action plan. The meetings also generated momentum in relation to the importance of Arkansas's creative constituents and what steps must happen next to ensure stability. ▢

AGENCY PROFILE

Vision Statement:

Arkansas policy makers, stakeholders and the general public will fully recognize the educational, economic and cultural impact of the arts, creative people and creative enterprises.

Mission Statement:

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

Goals:

- 1.** Encourage artistic excellence, diversity and innovation.
- 2.** Promote equitable access to the arts for all Arkansans.
- 3.** Develop arts in education for life-long learning.
- 4.** Enhance community cultural and economic development.
- 5.** Build and sustain the capacity of the Arkansas Arts Council to fulfill its mission.



February 24, 2010: Strategic Planning Session



October 24, 2010: ArtLinks 2010 Opening Remarks by Executive Director Joy Pennington

History of the Agency:

The AAC was established by state-level executive order in 1966 to allow the state government of Arkansas to receive funds from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). In 1971, Act 359 gave independent agency status to the Arts Council, with an executive director and a 17-member council appointed by the governor. In 1975, the AAC became one of the seven divisions of the Department of Arkansas Heritage. In 2003, Act 608 renamed the agency from “The Office of Arkansas State Arts and Humanities” to the “Arkansas Arts Council” (Arkansas State Code, 2010).

Strategic Partners:

- Agencies in the Dept. of Ark. Heritage
- ASU Folklife Program
- Mid-America Arts Alliance Museums Funding Initiative
- Regional tourism agencies
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Ark. Department of Parks & Tourism
- Ark. Literacy Councils
- Ark. Humanities Council
- Ark. Dept. of Economic Development
- Ark. Film Commission
- Arkansas Science & Tech. Authority
- Ark. Department of Education
- Main Street Arkansas programs

ARTS COUNCIL PROGRAMS

Grant Programs:

The AAC operates many successful grant programs throughout the state, as follows:

1. Arts In Education (AIE):

Initiates new arts programs in schools and local arts agencies and enhances existing ones by providing direct interaction with working artists in residencies. Emphasis is on exposure to the creative process through direct contact with professional artists. Three grants are

available for this category:

After School /Summer Residency Program, Arts Curriculum Project Grants and In-school Residency Program.

2. AIE Mini Grants: Grant program that funds pre-K through 12 schools for programs during school hours, and/or organizations that provide after school or summer programs.

These organizations have an opportunity to apply for AAC funding to:

i. Bring quality professional

artists into the classroom or other location to present one- to five-day, hands-on, curriculum-based arts activities.

ii. Present an educator professional development workshop in curriculum based arts activities either in conjunction with, or instead of, a residency.

Artists must be selected from the Arkansas AIE Artist Roster. Applicants may receive a maximum of \$2,000 using established AIE program rates for the artists' fees, travel, lodging and supplies. A 1:1 in-kind or cash match is required.

3. The Expansion Arts

Program: Created to assist qualified emerging arts organizations in developing increased organizational capacity by helping them hire or maintain professional administrative personnel.

4. General Operating Support:

Designed for established, professionally managed not-for-profit organizations whose primary purpose is the production or presentation of the arts. Funds must be spent on non-program activities, such as salaries, rent, utilities, maintenance of facilities, staff travel and other expenses associated with the operations of the organization.

5. Individual Artist Fellowships:

Unconditional, non-



Regional Meeting #4



Regional Meeting #1

ArtLinks 2010



matching awards made directly to individual artists in recognition of their artistic abilities. Awards are based on the creative excellence of works submitted for review and are awarded to a limited number of artists of outstanding talent.

6. **Major Arts Partners:** This grant program is designed for eligible not-for-profit arts organizations with three-year budget averages equal to or greater than \$1 million.
7. **Collaborative Project Support:** Designed to encourage the production and/or presentation of a specific arts event, program series or multi-disciplinary arts project for Arkansans.

Events/Networks/Award Ceremonies:

The AAC has a mix of online resources and events to assist in networking and building a stronger sense of community among the state's creative class. The following is a list of specific events and online resources the AAC has put in place to work toward that end:

1. **Arkansas Living Treasure Award:** Recognizes Arkansas artists who have over a lifetime made significant contributions to their state and communities.
2. **Arkansas Artist Registry:** A central online resource that documents and promotes Arkansas arts and artists.
3. **ArtLinks Conference:** A conference for artists, arts administrators, educators, community leaders and other arts advocates. The

topic changes from year to year and the event includes speakers and panelists who provide insight on creative programs that are happening throughout Arkansas and around the country.

4. **Arts On Tour Roster:** A listing of the state's finest solo and ensemble performers, individual artists and art exhibitions available for touring within Arkansas.
5. **AIE Artist Roster:** Information about artists approved for AIE residencies.
6. **Governor's Arts Awards:** An annual recognition of individuals, organizations and corporations for their support of the arts in Arkansas.
7. **Small Works On Paper Touring Exhibition:** An annual touring visual arts exhibition coordinated by the AAC. ▢

FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN



Overview:

The following section outlines the strategies the AAC will follow from 2011-2015. Utilizing its five goals as an underlying structure, as seen in the Agency Profile, the AAC will follow this action plan to self-evaluate, develop annual staff project plans and implement new strategies in the state to meet the growing needs of key constituents.

GOAL 1: ENCOURAGE ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE, DIVERSITY AND INNOVATION

OBJECTIVES

Constituent Capacity

Building: Provide capacity-building assistance to non-profit arts organizations and artists with training, consulting, information, networking and communications.

Strategies:

1. **Monitoring Success:**
Regularly evaluate if focusing of resources toward capacity-building services best serves citizens and constituents.
2. **Information:** Provide information on the AAC's website, newsletter, e-news and in state and regional gatherings.
3. **Training:** Offer non-profit management training and grant writing workshops at AAC conferences, working in cooperation with regional partners. As taken from the 2010 Strategic Planning Survey, the following are the top 10 needs for non-profit arts organizations (in order of priority):

- i. Operating/admin funds
 - ii. Programming funds
 - iii. Fundraising
 - iv. Marketing/audience development
 - v. Public information/advocacy
 - vi. Facilities improvement
 - vii. Board development
 - viii. Network with similar interests
 - ix. Volunteer development
 - x. Help in planning
4. **Consulting:** Provide direct assistance through phone and on-site consulting. Over the next five years, the AAC will develop a network of regional partners to offer focused consulting to key populations in the state.
 5. **Leadership Development:** Work with Chambers of Commerce, small business incubators and higher education institutions to provide training and certification. Provide scholarships to individuals, as funds become available, to provide for this training.

6. Assistance Fund Grants:

Pending on available funding, provide grants for constituents to plan for their own capacity building, which includes but is not limited to:

- i. Contracting with a trainer
- ii. Attending conferences
- iii. Membership to related non-profits networks
- iv. Travel

Overall Metrics:

- i. Attendance at regional gatherings
- ii. Number of requests/questions from constituents in relation to information about capacity building.
- iii. Comments collected from constituents from various outlets (i.e., web site, gatherings, letters)
- iv. Number of direct consulting sessions
- v. Number of applicants for leadership development scholarships
- vi. Number of organizations

benefiting from capacity building strategies that report sustainable growth

Grant Programs: Maintain grant programs to provide funding for all of the AAC's grant programs. To do this, the AAC staff will monitor grant programs on the following benchmarks:

1. **Evaluate the Application Process:** Gather feedback from grantees on an annual basis to streamline grants and procedures.

Metrics:

- i. Time spent
- ii. Number of applicants
- iii. Number of revisions required
- iv. Overall level of user satisfaction
- v. Recommendations for change from applicants

2. **Monitor Types of**

Organizations: Perform annual adjustments to the AAC grant programs to reflect the market of non-profit organizations in the state.

Metrics:

- i. Focus of organization
- ii. Average age of organizations applying
- iii. Most pressing training needs
- iv. Economic conditions
- v. Number of new arts-related non-profits incorporating each year

3. **Other Key Metrics for AAC Grant Programs:**

- i. Amount needed vs. amount actually granted each year
- ii. Number of jobs created
- iii. Tracking of technical

assistance hours provided by state economic districting

iv. Tracking of number of organizations operating with a business/strategic plan vs. those without

v. Tracking of percentage of minority populations served by grant funds

vi. Number of persons with disabilities served by grant funds

Artist Services: In order to encourage and assist artists to achieve high standards of professional excellence, enact the following strategies to the AAC programs that focus on individual artists:

1. **Information and Training:**

Provide online/printed information and offer training through AAC staff or contracted partners to service the needs of the creative class of Arkansas. The following are the top 10 needs as defined by individual artists in the 2010 Strategic Planning Survey:

- i. Increased sales or other earnings
- ii. Marketing
- iii. Access to exhibition space
- iv. Validation of work
- v. Health insurance
- vi. Access to grant funding
- vii. Information
- viii. Networking
- ix. Finding equipment, materials and supplies
- x. Training or assistance with improving creative skills

2. **Networking and Convening:**

To better help independent artists network, the AAC will provide added support to bridge communication gaps between citizens and key constituents—especially in the disconnect between urban and surrounding rural communities.

Metrics:

- i. Number of networking organizations in Arkansas
- ii. Number of networking events held by region
- iii. Membership levels
- iv. Cost of membership and conferences to artists
- v. Artists in networking organizations vs. those with no access or awareness
- vi. Number of national networking organization chapters in the state vs. number of organizations created in Arkansas

3. **Other Key Metrics for AAC Independent Artist Services:**

- i. Number of artists who apply for individual grants vs. number funded
- ii. Number of artists operating with a business plan vs. those who are not
- iii. Number of years an artist has been in operation
- iv. Percentage of time artists apply to their craft (i.e., full-time, part-time, hobby)
- v. Income and tax revenue generated by artists annually
- vi. Service hours provided to artists with disabilities

FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

GOAL 2: PROMOTE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO THE ARTS FOR ALL ARKANSANS

OBJECTIVES

Advocacy: As a key recommendation from the 2007-2009 creative economy study, encourage the establishment of a creative economy-focused advocacy non-profit organization to ensure that one of the largest employment sectors in the state of Arkansas receives the support it needs to remain operational in the state's economy (RTS, 2007-2009).

The AAC will assist the organization in its efforts to strengthen the network of creative professionals in the state who, at present, are in need of additional support for their creative businesses pursuits; to increase funding and technical assistance for non-profit arts organizations throughout Arkansas; and to increase the amount and quality of arts education programming in pre-K – 12 schools. A similar initiative was active some years ago (Arkansans for The Arts), and the lessons learned from this effort will be applied in the creation of this new entity.

Accessibility: Lead statewide efforts to ensure full accessibility to individuals with disabilities to participate

in cultural opportunities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

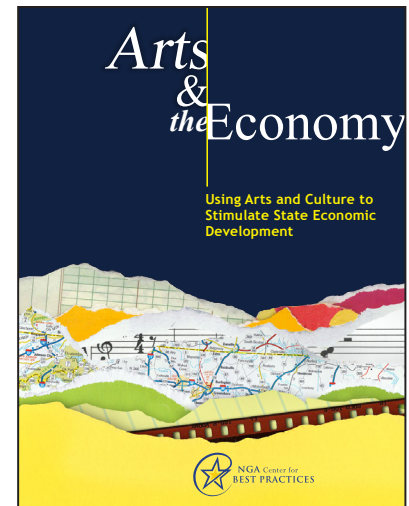
Metrics:

- i. Number of participants in the VSA (Very Special Arts) program
- ii. Monitoring of accessibility compliance of AAC grantees
- iii. Number of artists with disabilities and nature of their needs
- iv. Number of children and adults with disabilities who participate in AAC programs

Diversity: In order to increase equitable access to the arts, especially in the state's underserved populations and rural regions, the AAC will make additional efforts to increase diversity in all in grant programs, services, collaborations and events.

Metrics:

- i. Demographic information gathered from the AR Artist Registry and artist rosters
- ii. Demographic information of audience and others served by AAC grantees
- iii. Underserved populations employed by creative enterprises ▢

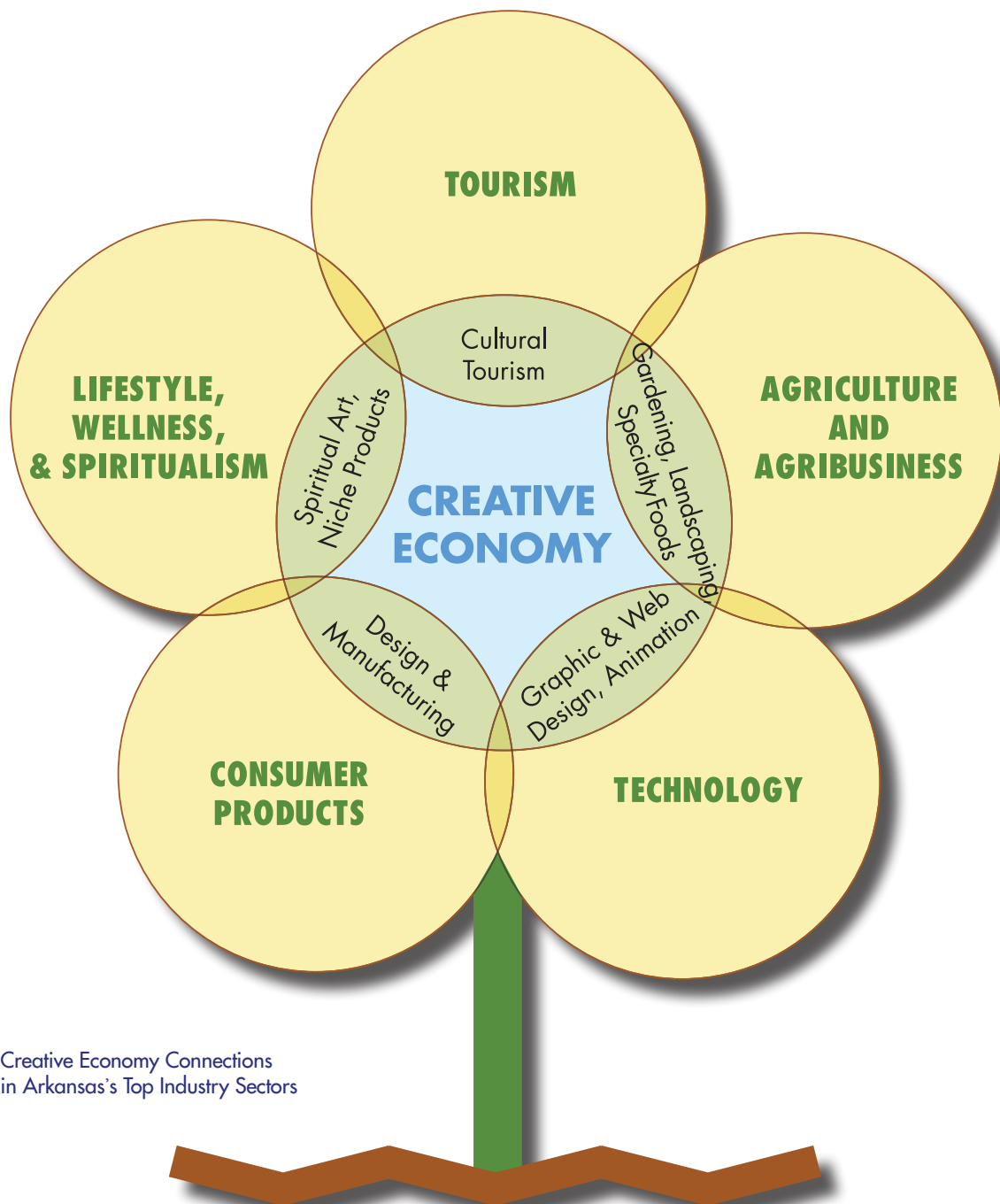
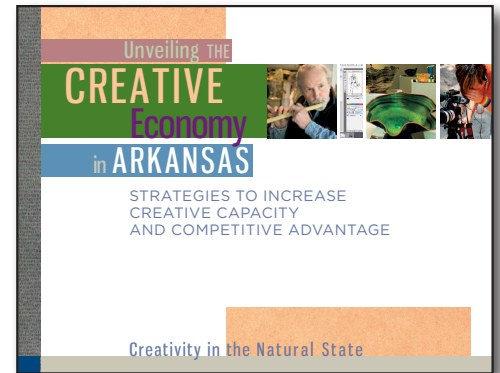
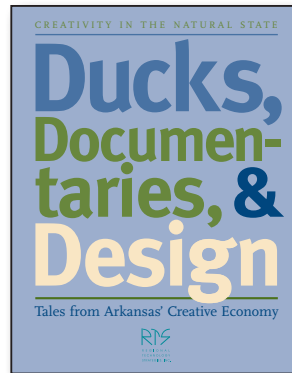
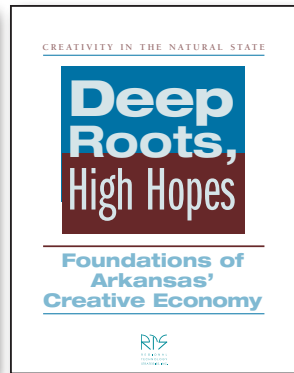
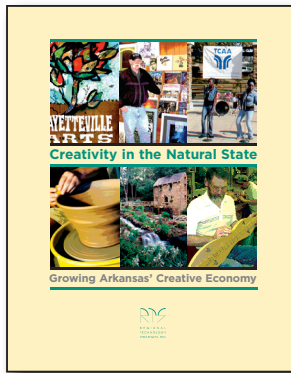


National Governors Association
2009 Report on Arts & the Economy



Info Diagram of the Creative Economy
Infrastructure and Creative Sectors in Arkansas

Creative Economy Study:
Volumes 1-4



Creative Economy Connections
in Arkansas's Top Industry Sectors

FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

GOAL 3: DEVELOP ARTS IN EDUCATION FOR LIFE-LONG LEARNING

OBJECTIVES

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

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

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

Strategies:

1. **ACT 245 Implementation:** Encourage all schools to implement ACT 245, which requires 40 minutes of visual arts and 40 minutes of music per week in Arkansas elementary schools.
2. **Arts Integration:** Present professional development opportunities for teaching artists, classroom teachers and community organizations to integrate the arts into classroom activities.
3. **Handbooks:** Continue to develop handbooks and planning guides to assist teachers and teaching artists.

4. **Arts in Education Conferences and Workshops:** Work with educational cooperatives to train teachers to integrate the arts into their classroom curriculum.

Key Metrics for Arts in Education Programs:

- i. Number of students served
- ii. Success of Act 245
- iii. Number of teachers who receive training and/or grants
- iv. Career paths chosen by graduating students
- v. Number of school programs with visiting artists
- vi. Number of organizations applying for grants vs. those who get funded
- vii. Increase or decrease in the number of new arts education programs ▢

Creative Youth



GOAL 4: ENHANCE COMMUNITY CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Independent Artists

OBJECTIVES

Creative Economic Development: Assist Arkansas cultural organizations, state agencies and educational institutions as they increasingly work to strengthen creative enterprises (i.e., independent artists, video production studios, design & architecture firms, photographers) as an important economic sector, which is vital to the local and state economy.

Metrics:

- i. Integration and comprehension of creative economy in Chambers of Commerce throughout the state
- ii. Number of creative enterprises
- iii. Number of creative enterprise jobs
- iv. Policy initiatives at the state level

Cultural Tourism: Work with the Department of Parks and Tourism to market and raise visibility of Arkansas cultural organizations and events.

Metrics:

- i. Number of park visitors per year who attend one or more cultural events
- ii. Length of stay for

tourists attending cultural events vs. those who do not

- iii. Number of visitors whose primary reason for choosing Arkansas is to attend an arts event
- iv. Number of tour guides employed
- v. Convention and visitor guest books
- vii. Number of tourism organizations receiving grant funds for arts-related programming and promotion
- viii. Revenue generated

Rural Arts Development:

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

Metrics:

- i. Number, location and types of programs offered
- ii. Growth/decrease in number of participants
- iii. Number of organizations with rural outreach programs
- iv. Number of counties served □



FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

GOAL 5: BUILD AND SUSTAIN THE CAPACITY OF THE ARKANSAS ARTS COUNCIL TO FULFILL ITS MISSION

OBJECTIVES

Visibility: Enhance AAC visibility with a consistent message, effective promotional materials and regular communication to constituents and policy makers.

Strategies:

1. Maintain high-visibility programs (i.e., Governor's Arts Awards, Arts on Tour, Arts in Education).
2. Maintain the visual identity graphic standards established for the AAC.
3. Maintain all web-based AAC marketing outlets (i.e., website, social networking sites, mailing lists).
4. Continually generate promotional material (i.e., informational videos, print materials, talking points) for Council members, regional partners and AAC staff to use in getting the word out.
5. Require grantees to publicly acknowledge their AAC funding and submit proof (i.e., print ads, newspaper clippings, brochures) in their interim and final reports.
6. Continue to supply logo files and text of crediting message for use in grantee publications and advertisements.

Metrics:

- i. Organization social media member count
- ii. Number of outreach

programs

iii. Mailings list web hits

iv. Number of locations with informational print material

Funds Development:

Secure increased state, federal and private funding to meet increasing needs for support due to the successful development of local arts organizations.

Strategies:

1. Maintain a policy that the AAC will seek funds from the private sector for support for statewide initiatives (not operations) that do not directly compete with non-profit constituent organizations.
2. Explore additional sources of federal funding through U.S. Department of Education, Department of Justice and other agencies targeting youth services.
3. Help constituent organizations identify and gain funding from other sources: local self-improvement tax districts, hotel/motel bed taxes, foundations, NEA and other state and federal agencies.
4. Advocate for increased private-sector philanthropy to be directed at cultural programming and arts

education.

Metrics:

- i. Number of organizations receiving money
- ii. Creative types receiving technical assistance
- iii. Number of AAC grants given
- iv. Number of NEA grants given (outside of the AAC)
- v. Private philanthropy dollars granted to cultural programs/organizations
- vi. Arts organizations' annual budgets
- vii. Geographic and cultural diversity of AAC grantees

Council Development:

Continue to recommend appointment of council members who can advise the AAC, communicate its message to constituents and actively participate in advocacy and funds development.

Strategies:

1. Implement mentoring efforts where seasoned Council members help train new members in an effort to shorten the learning curve.
2. Develop additional material about Council membership to inform new appointees of expectations and responsibilities.
3. Regularly survey Council members to create a database

of best practices and ongoing developments among Council members' constituents.

4. Establish and maintain a set list of talking points for Council members to take back to constituents in their district.

Metrics:

- i. Quarterly meeting attendance
- ii. Council member survey results
- iii. Participation in grant panels and committees
- iv. Number of public speaking/outreach efforts by Council members
- v. Number of Council members volunteering for additional terms

Professional Development:

AAC staff and Council members will continue to participate in professional development.

Metrics:

- i. Professional development workshops/seminars attended
- ii. Feedback on professional development programs attended by staff and Council members
- iii. Increase/decrease in AAC mailing lists, social media applications, attendance at events and grant applications

Information Technology:

The Council will enhance its capacity to communicate with constituents with updated website, a constituent listserv and use of data for planning, management and advocacy.

Strategies:

1. Strengthen AAC information

technology capacity to better use information and communication technologies.

2. Expand and update constituent listservs.
3. Expand e-mail database and use of e-news to frequently update constituents of opportunities and to maintain AAC visibility.
4. Explore feasibility of issuing a Request For Proposal to grant/contract with a regional partner to host a statewide calendar of cultural events and opportunities.
5. Put more AAC publications, guidelines, handbooks and planning templates online.
6. Collect AAC data on organizations, budgets and audiences to identify trends and economic impact of the cultural sector (see goal 4).

Metrics:

- i. Number of participants in AAC programs and events
- ii. Web hits
- iii. Amount of distributed print material
- iv. Social media membership growth/decrease
- v. Listserv growth/decrease

Planning and Evaluation:

The Council will monitor progress on this plan annually reporting the extent to which objectives have been fulfilled—and will renew the plan with constituent assessment and strategic planning in 2014-2015.

Strategies:

1. **Annual Review:** The Council will annually review progress on planned objectives.
2. **Program Evaluation:** The

Council will choose one major program annually for a comprehensive evaluation.

3. **Metric Database/Evaluation Matrix:** Over the next five years, AAC staff will monitor specific metrics outlined in the strategic plan that will provide accurate insight for decision making in future development.

Metrics:

- i. AAC annual budget increase/decrease
- ii. Constituent survey feedback
- iii. AAC staff feedback/recommendations
- iv. Types of organizations funded
- v. Longevity of funded organizations

Major Project Plans:

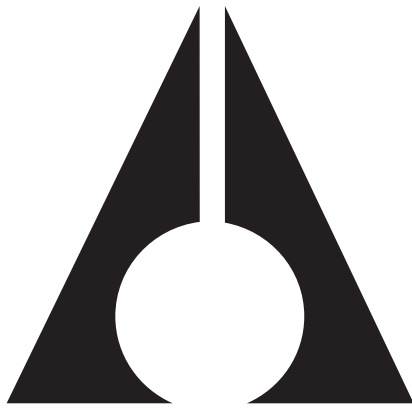
Program staff will develop annual major project plans, aligned with this strategic plan, which will be the basis of their annual performance reviews.

Metrics:

- i. Goals met for the year
- ii. Increase/decrease in the number of independent artists
- iii. Increase/decrease in arts organizations that have been in operation for three years or more
- iv. Increase/decrease in the number of newly incorporated arts organizations
- v. Successful implementation of arts education initiatives □

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