New Jersey State Council on the Arts Announces CARES Act Funds for Arts Organizations

Federal Funds Help Support Nonprofit Arts Industry Statewide Impacted by COVID-19

The New Jersey State Council on the Arts will distribute $492,700 in federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to help preserve jobs and stabilize arts organizations statewide. The announcement was made at the Arts Council's public meeting held virtually earlier today.

"My office is working closely with the Council board and staff to understand the ongoing impact of the crisis on the arts," said Secretary of State Tahesha Way. "With the release of these federal CARES Act funds, the Council continues its dedication to providing impactful and thoughtful service to New Jersey's arts sector. The Council is grateful to the Murphy Administration for recognizing that art matters in New Jersey, and for the inclusion of the arts as we look to the future and develop strategies to reopen and rebuild."

"The nonprofit arts industry, like so many others, is reeling from the financial and societal impacts of the current crisis," said Council Chair Elizabeth Mattson. "Health and safety remain the highest priorities as organizations that exist to bring people together, attempt to adapt to restrictions, cancelations, layoffs, refunds and mounting expenses. The innovation we've seen from artists and arts organizations speaks volumes about the resiliency to come. And while their creativity may know no limits, these community anchors need support now to be able to weather this storm and survive."

Council Executive Director Allison Tratner remarked, "This CARES Act funding comes at a critical time, and we are grateful the federal government continues to include the arts sector in strategies for recovery. With our partners at the National Endowment for the Arts we will continue to work to get resources out the door quickly. The financial need is tremendous, and our goal is to provide meaningful relief for as many organizations as is responsibly possible."

Last month, the National Endowment for the Arts awarded nearly $30 million in CARES Act funds to the nation's states and territories to ensure broad distribution throughout the country. The Endowment instructed State Arts Agencies, like the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, to regrant the funds to help arts organizations endure the economic hardships caused by the forced closure of their operations due to the spread of COVID-19.

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As an essential part of our state's economy and overall quality of life, New Jersey's arts sector, when it is stable and thriving, employs thousands of people, engages millions, and provides irreplaceable value for communities, families, residents and visitors.

The Council has identified nearly 60 nonprofit arts organizations and 21 County Arts Agencies as eligible to receive the CARES Act funds. This swift and strategic distribution will ensure the funds reach organizations of varying sizes, touching communities throughout the state. View the list of organizations and county arts agencies here.

Chair Mattson expressed gratitude for the Murphy Administration's ongoing, clear guidance and support. She commended essential workers and pointed to the 24/7 resources for health and safety available at NJ.gov thanks to the thousands of public service sector professionals.

About the New Jersey State Council on the Arts

The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, created in 1966, is a division of the NJ Department of State. The Council was established to encourage and foster public interest in the arts; enlarge public and private resources devoted to the arts; promote freedom of expression in the arts; and facilitate the inclusion of art in every public building in New Jersey. The Council receives direct appropriations from the State of New Jersey through a dedicated, renewable Hotel/Motel Occupancy fee, as well as competitive grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. To learn more about the Council, please visit www.artscouncil.nj.gov.

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