



**Joint Legislative Hearing on 2023 Executive Budget Proposal: Economic
Development/Arts
February 9, 2023**

Dear Members of the New York State Senate,

My name is Nicole Touzien and I am the Executive Director of Dancewave, located in Gowanus, Brooklyn. I am writing to request robust support for NYSCA and for capital funding for culture.

Since 1995, Dancewave has served a diverse and all-abilities audience across New York City and beyond. We reach over 6,200 youth, adults, and seniors each year through a robust portfolio of programs that promote self-expression, social and emotional growth, cultural competence, and community-building. We are a trusted service provider and community hub with documented impact. Each year, we facilitate up to \$1M in college scholarships for young artists, provide over \$75,000 in free and subsidized Dancewave Center programming to youth and adults from underrepresented communities, and reach over 4,000 public school students with supportive multicultural dance experiences.

The value of Dancewave's work extends far beyond the thousands of lives we directly and positively impact, and the dollar amount of free program access and college scholarships students receive via our programs. We are an integral part of New York City's vibrant arts and cultural community, which is not only celebrated, but is also relied upon as an anchor for small towns and urban neighborhoods throughout the State.

New York City's arts and cultural community drives traffic to local businesses and restaurants, strengthens communities, provides programs for children and seniors, and make streets safer for everyone. Access to a robust cultural life is why people move to and remain in New York State; and we must invest in the human infrastructure of our arts and cultural communities if we are to retain residents.

Last year New York State distributed \$100M for arts programming through NYSCA. And an additional investment of \$150M in capital funding for cultural groups. I urge you to renew this funding so that we can continue to do the work of rebuilding our economy and communities. A cut of the size proposed in the Executive Budget would be devastating to our recovery and future as a vibrant and culture-rich New York.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Nicole Touzien
Nicole Touzien
Executive Director

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Founded in 1995 by Diane Jacobowitz