



Invest in the arts! Invest in a thriving NY State!

Dear NY State Legislators,

There is a critical need for support for the arts and culture sector of NY State in the FY24 budget. Investing in culture in every community in every locality will lift our whole state and lead to a robust and equitable recovery.

Culture is the core of NY State's economy. For the past decade New York State's creative economy has contributed more than 7% to the GSP** annually, and pre-pandemic it generated 484,000 jobs and \$120 billion in economic activity.* Culture is a jobs multiplier, providing work not just for artists, but for museum administrators, security guards, sound technicians, costume creators, and the myriad other jobs that make up the creative economy.

New York's tourism industry depends on a thriving creative sector.** Culture taken as a whole is one of the top drivers of tourism in New York State. The NYS Comptroller's report found that of the \$50B that tourists spent in NYC (of the \$74B tourists spend statewide) in 2019, 12% went to "arts, culture, and entertainment", and the other 88% went to: hotels, restaurants, retail shops, and local transport.***** If we want to get dollars to the local businesses listed, we need to support the arts sector that attracts the visitors in the first place!

Cultural centers anchor communities and keep residents in NYS. Cultural activity drives street traffic to local businesses and restaurants, strengthening communities, providing programs for children and youth, and safer streets for everyone. With increased mobility due to remote work options, it is more important than ever to invest in reasons to live in NYS. Arts and culture are what our state excels in and what makes a community a place to raise children—with more local art classes, with places to gather to hear music, and theaters to watch stories unfold. For too long there has been a lack of investment in lower wealth communities, from BIPOC urban neighborhoods to struggling rural towns. Every New Yorker needs the community strengthening power of culture.

Fragile recovery. Our state's invaluable arts organizations are slowly recovering from the pandemic shutdown—culture was the hardest hit sector. Attendance is coming back but still below 2019 levels. And the costs of safety protocols and HVAC improvements continue to drain resources. Now is the time to invest in a continued recovery so that our cultural centers can continue to lead us to a robust and thriving future.

**We ask that the legislature renew the funding for NYSCA at FY23 levels and renew the FY23 investment in capital funding for culture, in the FY24 budget
We additionally ask for an investment in arts education by increasing arts capacity at NYSED and restoring funding for summer arts programs.**

Now is not the time to cut arts and culture.

Many thanks for your attention and support

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Sources

*New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer's 2019 Creative Economy Report

** National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, Creative Economy State Profiles

*** Brookings, Lost Art: Measuring Covid-19's Devastating Impact on America's Creative Economy, August 2020

****Source: Americans for the Arts, Arts & Economic Prosperity 5, 2017

***** [New York State Comptroller, New York City's Tourism Industry - Igniting the Return, April 2021](#)