



Talking Points

The Arts Division FY20/21 Budget Request to Governor Sununu

Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Division of the Arts (Arts Council) FY20/21 budget request to Governor Sununu includes the first significant General Fund increase in a generation. It would increase the state's investment from 30¢ per resident to \$1.00 per resident. The investment would address key issues in our communities and economy:

- Opioids/mental health: Studies show that artistic activities can assist in the prevention of addiction, and in the treatment of addiction as well as mental health disorders. The Arts Council makes grants in these areas but more can be done to benefit the state. The request includes additional funds for opioid/mental health-specific grants and partnerships and projects that serve veterans and seniors. It should be noted that expanding this grant category also increases employment of creative workers and hence benefits the overall economy.

The budget also includes funding for a dedicated Grant Coordinator for Arts in Health. Requests for resources and training have increased with the opioid/mental health crisis and the increase in the senior/caregiver population. The program will have greater impact with a full time Coordinator.

- Economic and 21st century workforce development - New investments dedicated to three important areas related to economic/workforce development:
 - A new grant program to invest in creative workers in accessing entrepreneurial training and opportunities to grow their small businesses.

- Both the Arts Council's Strategic Planning process and a convening in the spring called *Creativity Connects* identified the need for business and career training for creative workers.
- Additional funding in the General Projects grant category to support projects on creative placemaking. These projects employ creative workers and generate interest in community spaces, leading to increased business activity. In FY21, the agency would like to create a new grant category to support community cultural planning, to grow business development and integration of creative businesses into the local planning process.
 - STEM to STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics: Creativity is an essential component of training in science, technology, engineering and math. The Arts Council will meet this need with additional grants to K-12 schools for artist residencies that specialize in STEAM projects.

Increasing the State's arts budget from \$.30 to \$1 per resident shows a commitment to a key part of New Hampshire's economy and way of life. Governor Sununu has spoken about wanting to attract creative workers to New Hampshire, and said that more funds should be allocated to the arts. This increase would raise our state arts investment ranking from 44th in the country to 18th – and would strengthen our communities and boost the NH economy.