



American Rescue Plan – Arts Sector Opportunities

YOUR LOCAL ARTS ADVOCACY IS ESSENTIAL!

In March, President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan (ARP). The new \$1.9 trillion relief package provides several provisions that will assist the arts sector survive the economic strain caused by the pandemic. The American Rescue Plan includes an extension of federal unemployment programs, more funding and flexibility for the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG), an expansion of the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) through the end of 2021, \$135 million in arts relief through the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and \$350 billion in relief to tribal, state, county, and municipal governments that could be used for additional relief for the arts sector.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

While the CARES Act, passed in 2020 during the Trump administration did include provisions specific to the arts, only cities and counties with populations over 500,000 saw direct relief funding. ARP provides \$350 billion for state and local governments. That means every local government in South Dakota will receive some amount of funding. For example, here are just a few:

Lemmon = \$199,634
Leola = \$72,609
Rapid City = \$13,025,663
Brookings = \$4,151,690
Hill City = \$175,488
Yankton = \$2,497,475
Aberdeen = \$4,805,009
Faulkton = \$120,563
Spearfish = \$1,999,068
Milbank = \$527,654

Full City List:

<https://www.nlc.org/resource/estimated-local-allocations-in-the-american-rescue-plan/>

Full County List:

<https://www.naco.org/resources/featured/state-and-local-coronavirus-fiscal-recovery-funds>

Tribal Funding Overview:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/16/fact-sheet-biden-administration-invests-4-billion-in-american-rescue-plan-funding-to-combat-covid-19-in-indian-country/>

HOW CAN THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDS BE USED?

This funding is much more flexible than CARES Act funding for governments. Bottom line, ARP provides many arts funding opportunities at the local level. The four allowable uses for funds are:

1. Respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality.
2. Respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers that are performing such essential work, or by providing grants to eligible employers that have eligible workers who perform essential work.
3. Provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue due to the COVID-19 public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year prior to the emergency.
4. Make necessary investments in water, sewer or broadband infrastructure.

HOW DOES THE ARTS SECTOR FIT THE CRITERIA?

The first allowable use of funds – *responding to negative economic impacts* – fits the arts in every way, especially given the focus on tourism, travel, and hospitality. This guidance is for every level of government, meaning arts groups could see relief from their city, county, and the state. How should you advocate for local funding? Not every city/county will approach this funding the same, so your advocacy strategies will have to be hyper-local and may not be uniform even within your own county or region.

The US Treasury full guidelines are available here: <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds>

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE?

When will local communities receive federal dollars? The federal government has 60 days from March 11 to send money to each entity. States, counties, and cities with populations over 50,000 will get their funds directly from the feds. Smaller cities/towns will have their money sent to them through the state within 30 days of the state receiving those funds. Governments can spend these funds through 2024.

WHAT NEXT?

What should local arts leaders do to advocate for arts support as part of your communities ARP funding: Reach Out Locally NOW! While final guidance has not yet been issued, local governments are already talking about what they may be able to do with their funding. They need to hear from the arts NOW so that when they meet to actually put a plan in place, they've already heard from you.

1. Team Up! There is strength in numbers. Team up with your fellow arts groups and nonprofit groups to meet with local leaders. Write Op-Eds together, issue public statements, and host meetings.
2. Stay Engaged. Keep an eye on the process, look for opportunities to keep in touch with your local leaders. Don't depend only on alerts from Arts South Dakota – local governments may move at totally different paces than the state, let alone their neighbors. We'll be posting updates of course, but locally – you're going to be the best advocates.



3. **Think Through the Process.** This advocacy work is not just about being noticed – it’s about being heard and being useful. You want to be sure that your requests are limited to what is supported, but also how it is supported. As we’ve learned throughout COVID-19 relief packages – the secret is in the application, administration, and reporting of funds. They all need to be arts-friendly so that all arts groups have the opportunity to benefit.
4. **Be Ready.** This can happen very fast, and it can also happen very slow (funding can be used through 2024). When the time comes, you need to already be there, early and prepared. We cannot develop a cohesive strategy that reaches every community and accounts for nuance of local needs, so we’ll be relying on you, local advocates, to help ensure the arts are supported at the local level. Start making a plan now!
5. **Stay in Touch.** Hearing about your experiences, tactics, and plans will help us to inform advocates across the state about possible approaches and success stories.

ADDITIONAL ADVOCACY RESOURCES FROM ARTS SOUTH DAKOTA:

Advocacy 101

<https://artssouthdakota.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ArtsSD-Advocacy-OneSheeter-BW.pdf>

A few South Dakota facts

<https://artssouthdakota.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/1-2020-Arts-South-Dakota-Advocacy.pdf>

10 Reasons to invest in the arts during a crisis

<https://artssouthdakota.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/10.pdf>

Advocacy Webinar

<https://artssouthdakota.org/2020/01/28/arts-south-dakota-partnered-with-lead-south-dakota-to-present-a-grassroots-advocacy-training-seminar/>

Covid 19 Resource Page

<https://artssouthdakota.org/covid-19-resources/>

Special thank you to colleagues and friends of Arts South Dakota for allowing us to follow their lead in sharing this information: GP McLeer, South Carolina Arts Alliance (<https://scartsalliance.net>) and Nate McGaha, Arts North Carolina (<https://artsnc.org>)

Arts South Dakota, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, enriches the lives of South Dakotans and their visitors, by advancing the arts through service, education and advocacy.

www.ArtsSouthDakota.org

