

FUNDING FOR THE CREATIVE SECTOR IN FY25

BUDGET TRENDS FOR ARTS & CULTURE IN MASSACHUSETTS

Arts and culture are an essential part of our lives, communities, and economy. It helps us tell our stories, feel understood, and inspired. The creative sector is also central to Massachusetts' economy: in 2022, the tourism industry accounted for \$24.2 billion in domestic and international spending, 21 million domestic and international travelers, \$1.9 billion in state and local taxes, and 131,200 jobs in Massachusetts. The arts and culture sector ranked second for value added to the state's economy - that's more than construction or education services.

The Healey-Driscoll Administration and Legislature unanimously approved \$25 million for the Mass Cultural Council in FY24. This investment was an 11% increase over the agency's budget in FY23, ranking Massachusetts as 8th in the nation for annual state funding for the arts and ensuring \$3.71 of arts spending for every resident of Massachusetts.

FUNDING FOR CREATIVITY IN FY25

Recent investments in arts and culture are encouraging and necessary as the sector continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and face other challenges experienced by Massachusetts residents, including the current costs of living, childcare, and education.

Even with last year's increase, the Mass Cultural Council's budget in FY24 still amounts to less than 1% of the state's annual budget.

We can - and need to - do more to ensure that artists and creatives can continue to create, work, build their creative businesses, and thrive in Massachusetts in the coming years.

We can stand up for the creative community by showing our support for the Mass Cultural Council's request for \$28 million in FY25.

As the FY25 Budget season begins, you can count on MASSCreative to send you timely updates about what's proposed in each version of the budget. You can play a role in shaping arts and culture policy by contacting your state representative and state senator and asking them to prioritize \$28 million for the Mass Cultural Council in FY25.



FUNDING FOR THE CREATIVE SECTOR IN FY25

\$5 FOR CREATIVITY

The MASSCreative Action Network continues to work with cross-sector and legislative partners to organize for \$5 for Creativity: a multi-year campaign to increase the Mass Cultural Council's annual budget to \$35 million, or \$5 per capita.

If we want Massachusetts to remain a state where people want to live, work, and build their futures, public investments in arts and culture are essential. Creativity contributes beauty, vibrancy, and connection that attracts visitors and makes Massachusetts a place that people want to call home. \$5 per capita would place Massachusetts in the top ten states for public arts funding in the country, and help us retain the creative workforce and talent needed to ensure the Commonwealth is a creative destination.



This Year's State Budget Process

Every year, state elected officials negotiate a budget for the coming year. This year, Massachusetts must consider several inputs when developing a spending plan:

- State revenue continues to be lower than forecasted. In early January, the Healey-Driscoll Administration cut spending for Executive Branch departments.
- Past federal acts, including the CARES Act and American Rescue Plan Act, provided Massachusetts with additional resources to cover costs due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impact. These resources have been spent or allocated. These one-time funding sources helped balance FY21 - FY24 budgets.
- Costs continue to rise and unexpected events require state spending. Natural disasters, as well as the demand for housing displaced individuals, require state resources.

Lawmakers will have difficult choices when creating the FY25 Budget. Advocates for the creative sector must unite to share the value, impact, and necessity of arts, culture, and creativity with elected officials.

MASSCreative is your resource for up-to-date information so you can confidently and effectively advocate for a more equitable and inclusive creative sector for all residents in the Commonwealth.

CONTACT US

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