



NEW JERSEY STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS
FY22 PROGRAM AND OPERATIONS PLAN
(Based on adequate human and financial resources)

OVERVIEW

As of this writing, New Jersey is amid reopening after 15 months of restrictions, closures, and halted public activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The experiences of the last year have challenged and changed the arts industry in profound and lasting ways. Tremendous financial losses threaten nonprofit arts organization's sustainability, thousands remain unemployed or under employed, and uncertainty about the future makes planning and programming more challenging than ever. This reality, layered with the call to address issues of social and racial injustice, brings into focus the need for action and change as the sector works to re-emerge and serve communities, families, and individuals statewide.

Priorities articulated in this plan are determined within the framework of the Council's [Long-Range Strategic Plan \(2018-2023\)](#). While the field today looks different than it did when the plan was created, agency goals remain relevant. Strategies for reaching those goals and the measurement of progress has changed. Building a strategy of grants and services that is responsive to the needs, challenges, and opportunities in the sector today is the highest priority as we look to maximize the unique role of the Council to serve the field during this time of change and recovery.

The Department of State (DOS) closed the Council office on State Street in Trenton on March 17, 2020, and all staff have been working remotely ever since. The DOS plan to bring people back to the office is under development. The Council currently employs a workforce of 14, including 11 full-time, one temporary, and one part-time employee, and one assigned to the Cultural Trust, which continues to have no administrative appropriation. Efforts are underway to right-size the Council team and fill staff vacancies, and adequately increase capacity to keep pace with the growth of programs and services. The Council board has 13 voting seats filled and four vacancies.

The workforce is currently organized in four units with distinct but overlapping responsibilities: Operations; Programs & Services; Communications; and Artist Services (including Public Art). Each unit head reports to the Executive Director. The Executive Director reports to the Council Chair and, within the DOS, to the Secretary of State (or designee).

The Council’s purchase of goods and services, personnel matters, processing of payments, the system of accounting, and IT are all coordinated through the DOS. Grantees’ successful interaction with SAGE (DOS electronic grants system) continues to improve through ongoing upgrades led by Council staff.

In FY22 the Council will, as always, operate in three fiscal years simultaneously, carrying out the administrative processes for multiple grant programs, upholding the highest standards of accountability, operational efficiency, and broad public support. The truncated fiscal calendar in FY21, paired with six additional and unexpected recovery grant programs, and the development of new non-grants services, meant significantly increased demand on staff to maintain a rigorous workflow. This year we will focus on streamlining and building capacity internally in order to maximize our goals to strategically support the field in trusted and new ways.

FY22 BUDGET

REVENUE SOURCES	
Cultural Projects Appropriation	\$ 31,900,000
National Endowment for the Arts Grant	\$ 976,100
American Rescue Plan (ARP) from NEA	\$ 875,600
Administration Appropriation	\$ 405,000
Total Revenue	\$ 34,156,700
EXPENDITURES	
Administrative Budget	\$ 1,900,000
Available for Grants	\$ 32,256,700

The Council enters FY22 with a historic \$31,900,000 Cultural Projects Appropriation from the State of New Jersey, a 60% increase over last year, and a 99% increase over the level funded \$16 million budget from FY10 – FY20. The Council’s Administrative Appropriation remains unchanged at \$405,000. State Budget language allows for up to \$500,000 of the Cultural Projects funds to be spent on agency operations. Those dollars combined do not cover agency costs, and we will again rely on funds from the National Endowment for the Arts to bridge the gap.

The Administrative budget for FY22 is \$1,900,000. This budget includes the Department of State’s projection of salaries and benefits for Council staff, as well as all non-salary operations costs. In all, the total administrative budget is 5.5% of the Council’s total projected spending for FY22.

The Council has been awarded \$976,100 in the third year of a three-year commitment of federal support from the National Endowment for the Arts. This increase (last year’s award was \$945,700) includes funds to strengthen the State’s folk arts infrastructure as well as support for Poetry Out Loud. NEA funds provide a portion of the agency’s operational costs and additional grant funds to support the work of the Council statewide. Additionally, this year, the Council will regrant \$875,600 in

ARP funds from the NEA as part of our investment in continued recovery and operational sustainability for nonprofit arts organizations.

The FY22 summary of revenue and expenditures as approved by the Grants Committee, together with the complete list of FY22 awards, including funding principles, annual agency priorities, budget and program plan - as approved by the Council on July 27, 2021 - will constitute the Council's Annual Report to the Governor, Legislature, and to the citizens of New Jersey.

New Jersey State Council on the Arts Long Range Strategic Plan (LRSP) Goals for 2018-2023

1. *Strategically supported New Jersey artists and arts organizations.*

Maintain stability in the field, encourage innovation, and increase access and equity in grantmaking.

2. *Quality arts education and lifelong opportunities for everyone.*

Increase access to and participation in arts education opportunities for all New Jerseyans, in educational settings and throughout their lives.

3. *People of all ages, abilities and backgrounds engaged in the arts.*

Increase participation in and access to arts events, experiences, and opportunities for all people.

4. *New Jersey communities thriving through the arts.*

Sustain, identify, and create opportunities for arts leaders and artists to participate in development and social change initiatives statewide, placing emphasis on the support of those communities traditionally under-resourced.

5. *Widespread public understanding of the importance of the arts.*

Raise awareness and understanding of the importance of the arts, and the positive impact of a thriving arts industry for all facets of New Jersey life.

FY22 PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND OPERATIONS PLAN

The priorities listed below are the result of ongoing self-assessment and field communication. Measuring our progress under last year's Program Plan (in the context of our LRSP), accounting for initiatives underway, current circumstances, and agency capacity, these priorities broadly describe the areas of work to which staff and board have committed. Work plans, timelines, and goals are established within each professional unit, using these priorities as our guide.

1. *Sustain and advance effective programs and services; identify and deliver changes and improvements that align with sector needs. (LRSP Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)*

- Advance effective core agency programs and services in the FY22 and FY23 application cycles, including direct grants and services to artists, organizations, and partners.

- Assess and challenge inequities (racial, geographic, socioeconomic, etc.) in existing grant programs and services, focusing on the details that drive impact.
 - Collect and use data from the sector regarding the impact of the pandemic and the challenges and opportunities of reopening in order to develop new, responsive programs and services, such as grant opportunities for organizations and individuals.
 - Continue to provide resources, such as ADA plan review, to assist organizations in removing barriers and creating opportunities for people of all abilities and backgrounds to participate in the arts.
- 2. Take a comprehensive approach to understanding, challenging, and addressing issues of equity and access in agency operations, policies, communications, grantmaking and service provision. (LRSP Goals 1, 4, 5)**
- Continue next phase of learning through the facilitated Equity Audit to guide the staff and board toward more equitable and inclusive operations, services, and grantmaking.
 - Continue to engage with the field, grantmakers in other sectors, professional service providers, and partners nationwide to understand current challenges and trends for addressing inequities.
 - Build on field research, outreach, and resources that serve artists and organizations traditionally underrepresented.
- 3. Focus on grant and service opportunities to encourage innovation, engage new voices, and foster collaboration. (LRSP Goals 1, 2, 3, 4)**
- Create and identify opportunities through which artists and arts organizations can innovate – creatively, financially, and operationally – so they may survive any reality.
 - Leverage the Council’s network and partnerships to increase resources for arts programs from private and corporate sources.
 - Actively seek new partnerships that broaden the Council’s scope of service and support.
 - Encourage collaboration, both in the arts and across sectors, to strengthen the field and provide maximum public benefit for an equitable statewide recovery.
- 4. Grow programmatic support for grantee professional and fiscal health, and effectiveness. (LRSP Goals 1, 4, 5)**
- Proactively build out field-driven programs such as Communities of Practice and free professional development that focus on unique challenges facing the industry today.
 - Continue to help arts organizations build appropriate stability and capacity through the Critical Financial Services Program, and other initiatives, especially given the changing environment.
 - Evolve and expand technical assistance programs and professional services to the field such as public meetings, grant workshops, constituent meetings, and site visits.
- 5. Strengthen the network of County Arts Agencies to improve effectiveness in reaching local neighborhoods, communities, and populations traditionally under-resourced. (LRSP Goals 1, 2, 3, 4)**
- Incentivize strong internal county government support for County Arts Agencies (CAA).

- Align County and State partnerships to foster broad public understanding of the role of CAAs in distributing State resources.
 - Work with the CAAs to ensure effective community engagement practices result in an equitable extension of state resources to a diverse pool of grantees.
- 6. Expand and strengthen the network of New Jersey Folk Arts Centers to help increase outreach to and inclusion of diverse artists, cultures, and communities. (LRSP Goals 1, 2, 3, 4)**
- Help strengthen the Folk Arts Centers as a network; capitalize on the unique offerings and insights of each; and understand the challenges they face operationally.
 - Focus on the synergistic alignment of the Folk Arts Centers with the County Arts Agencies and Arts Education programs to increase outreach and impact.
 - Amplify the role of the Folk Arts Centers as critical statewide partners, anchors in their respective regions, and resources for New Jersey folk and traditional artists.
- 7. Improve Council communications tools to increase public access to opportunities, information, and advocacy resources. (LRSP Goals 1, 3, 4, 5)**
- Coordinate with the DOS to improve the Council’s website as a useful, accessible public tool.
 - Work with national, state, and local partners to promote the public value of the arts, incorporating critical needs for industry sustainability as well as the role of the arts in an equitable statewide recovery.
 - Continue to build our social media presence and email communications with the field including resources related to recovery, opportunities for organizations and artists, and a publication dedicated to highlighting folk and traditional arts statewide.
- 8. Broaden, deepen, and diversify the reach of Council supported arts education and lifelong learning initiatives and partnerships. (LRSP Goals 1, 2, 3, 5)**
- Maintain a leadership role in supporting the innovative adaptations of arts education providers in the field to help ensure students, teachers, artists, and individuals of all ages benefit from safe, quality arts experiences.
 - Support the work of all cosponsored arts education programs in expanding reach to more students, educators, and communities, diversifying partners and broadening geographic and artform representation.
 - Promote and encourage arts learning throughout life stages, with a focus on increasing creative aging opportunities statewide.
 - Build on the statewide and regional leadership role in supporting, training, and networking teaching artists.
- 9. Serve as a leader, partner, and advisor to help ensure the unique needs of the arts sector are considered as the state and the nation move through recovery. (LRSP Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)**
- Staff and board will continue to participate in national, statewide, and local committees such as the New Jersey Cultural Alliance for Response, the Performing Arts Readiness Project, September Ready, and the New Jersey Arts and Culture Recovery Fund.

- Leverage Council partnerships, programs, and opportunities to connect to funding, resources, and guidance for artists and organizations to ensure industry recovery.
- Continue to build strategic partnerships with statewide leaders in government, education, philanthropy, economic development, etc., to convey artists and arts organizations as invaluable community resources with critical needs.

10. Support and grow opportunities for the engagement with and creation of art in public places.

(LRSP Goals 1, 3, 4, 5)

- Manage artist selection for State-financed construction projects as dictated by the Public Buildings Arts Inclusion Act, with a focus on fair and equitable practices.
- Capitalize on opportunities to engage artists in permanent or temporary public art projects through new and existing partnerships.
- Continue the development of the Public Art Archive and the investigation of public art preservation solutions.
- Advocate for the inclusion of New Jersey artists in public art projects.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES SUMMARY

Advance what’s working, align with field needs:

The Council is a dynamic, multifaceted agency that administers several different grant programs, provides statewide leadership in multiple areas, engages in a battery of cosponsored projects, maintains intensive communication with constituents and the public, manages a large, active and multi-agency public art program, provides extensive technical assistance, maintains high standards of quality and accountability, and plays a leadership role in the state in promoting the public value of the arts for people and communities everywhere.

Sustained focus on recovery, equity, and innovation will help ensure the survival of this essential sector which contributes in irreplaceable ways to state and local economies, tourism, education, healthcare, and overall quality of life. Pending the availability of funds, the Council will be committed to strengthening the field with targeted grant programs and customized professional services that promote resiliency, fiscal health, and inclusivity, while also ensuring broad public access to the arts.

FY22 is year three of the Council’s three-year General Operating and General Program Support program. Increased multi-year operating support grants – the most challenging for nonprofits to find – as well as targeted project grants, will help existing and new grantee organizations keep their lights on, pay and hire new staff, safely reopen facilities, and plan for robust public programs during a time of intense financial uncertainty. Most nonprofits believe this year will be more challenging than last year. Council funds will help the industry deliver critical services and unforgettable experiences for people of all ages and all walks of life as New Jersey communities continue to heal and rebuild.

For all funding programs offered, regardless of circumstances, the process involves many steps, always beginning with a critical look at eligibility criteria and program guidelines. In accordance with

ongoing field feedback, Program Officer research, and changing industry practice, the Council will refine programs to align with sector needs. Once vetted and complete, the process includes distributing guidelines and conducting technical assistance workshops, reviewing notices of intent to apply, in-take of applications through the SAGE system, securing the services of panelists, running independent grant evaluation panels, and assembling data and panel evaluation materials for Grants Committee consideration at the end of the fiscal year. This year, with regard to process, is just as involved but different. The main differences this year include the extreme need field-wide, and the intention of the Council to meet those needs through the continuation of multi-year organizational support programs, and the establishment of new funding programs, necessitating new timelines, internal development, technical assistance and more. We have adapted our reporting structure to lighten the administrative load for grantees and add relationship building elements for Program Officers to gain a deeper sense of grantee needs. These adaptations will continue as we aim to streamline every element of the complex grants management process on both sides, and remove barriers to access of Council resources.

For the first time, last year, the Council successfully executed a relief grant program for individual artists. Building on the promise to help support continued recovery for practicing artists, the Council will increase investment in the Individual Artist Fellowship awards program. These awards honor New Jersey artists in 12 rotating disciplines each year. The FY22 Fellowships are in the following categories: Digital/Electronic, Film/Video, Painting, Printmaking/Drawing/Book Arts, and Prose. Due to the Council's outreach strategies over the past decade, we consistently receive applications from culturally diverse artists working in a wide range of disciplines from across the state. These efforts have been less successful, however, in reaching artists fully representative of New Jersey's geographic diversity. The Council will again offer incentives to encourage applications from areas historically underrepresented in the applicant pool.

A variety of other artist services initiatives will also continue as circumstances permit, including the Arts Annual, Fellowship Showcases, Opportunities for the Field listings, and the Senior Art show. Each of our artist programs has evolved through the crisis in unique ways and this year we will build on the lessons learned, adapting the innovations that increased engagement and provide promising, lasting resources for artists as they rely on these tools and experiences to strengthen their careers.

Understand, challenge, and address issues of equity and access:

Last year, the Council committed to phase one of a facilitated agency assessment; to explore the policies and practices at the core of our work to help identify and address issues of equity and access in operations, policies, and grantmaking. The goal was and continues to be to build on the strides already taken toward achieving greater balance, and ultimately a more diversified, broader, positive impact. FY22 will see the continuation of this commitment through the next phase. Moving from learning to planning and increased action. As we approach the start of our next long-range strategic planning cycle (FY23) we will be positioned to adjust our lens accordingly.

In addition to the internal work, the Council will also use the information gathered through grantee reporting and public input to help us identify the needed services to strengthen this work in the field, model initiatives that currently exist, and capitalize on the opportunities for collaboration and

education for the field and ourselves. Understanding the appropriate and effective language and approach to this sensitive and important work is critical, time consuming, and time sensitive.

The Council will continue to work toward ensuring that all Council programs, events, publications, and materials are accessible to people with disabilities. Moreover, the Council will serve as a resource and advocate to help arts organizations statewide remove barriers to access and create opportunities for people of all abilities to participate in the arts as a patron, donor, staff member, and/or artist. The Cultural Access Network, a cosponsored program of the Council's and the New Jersey Theatre Alliance, will continue to serve as the Council's Access Advisory Committee, helping to provide resources such as ADA plan review and compliance. Additionally, access measures at each public business meeting have become standard practice, such as the accessibility statement and the guaranteed provision of captioning services, both virtually and in-person. Continued focus will also be placed this year on availing Council materials in multiple languages.

The Council will continue aligning with the NEA Creative Forces Arts and Military Network to connect military and veteran families to arts opportunities in their communities and will remain involved in other arts and health initiatives that connect artists and art professionals with health and wellness providers, in order to educate, advocate for, and advance best practices in arts and health. Working with partner State Agencies in the NJ Department of Health, the NJ Department of Human Services, and the NJ Historical Commission, the Council will continue to recruit arts organizations to connect with new audiences through the Families First Discovery Pass program (FFDP). FFDP was designed to ensure New Jersey residents who receive public assistance benefits have access to the arts.

As the first-ever statewide partner in the Diversity in Arts Leadership (DIAL) program, the Council will work with our national partners to build on the successes of years one and two. In year three, we will continue the program, engaging students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds and pairing them with high performing New Jersey nonprofit arts organizations to help strengthen and encourage the next generation of creative leaders.

In addition to the Council's work supporting the next generation of diverse arts leaders, we will continue our work to support arts administrators of color at all levels of experience through the NJ Arts & Culture Administrators of Color Network – a partnership of the NJ Theatre Alliance, ArtPride NJ, Newark Symphony Hall, and the Council. The Network continues to gain impressive momentum with steadily growing membership and is already seen as a valuable resource for individuals and organizations statewide. For FY22, we will further our support of the Network through strategic funding, and collaboration related to learning, resource building, planning, and sustainability.

Fiscal health and sustainability in the field:

The Council provides technical and professional assistance to the field all year long. Considerable effort is made to ensure Council support services and grant opportunities are widely accessible to artists and arts organizations of varying disciplines, locations, and sizes. As organizational needs shift, the Council seeks to remain flexible to assist with capacity issues and challenges of grantees.

This year, we have seen organizations with a history of fiscal strength succumb to the realities of a shut down that took away nearly every opportunity for revenue, presented increased expenses, and forced furloughs, layoffs, and salary reductions. As these same organizations attempt to fully reopen, they are faced with simultaneously capitalizing on unique opportunities for growth and contending with daunting challenges including financial uncertainty, hiring and bringing staff back, consumer confidence, consistency in protocol, and facilities issues.

Building appropriate capacity is an important component of sustainability in the field, especially now. A main role of the Council is to serve as a resource for establishing partnerships, sharing information, or connecting like-missioned entities. Building on a strategy for support that began in FY19, and significantly expanded last year, the Council will continue to facilitate Communities of Practice (COP) which include cohorts of grantees, organized by operational capacity, service, or content area statewide. Participant input tells us these networks have great value and the learning goes both ways. We intend to maximize the potential of the COPs and similar networks through strategic growth in FY22.

As part of the Critical Financial Services Program the Council offers in partnership with the Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF), we will continue to review the financials of GOS/GPS Council grantees. Through this partnership we offer important initiatives that provide organizations with a customized financial analysis, providing insight and guidance to help either maintain or achieve greater stability. This year, the program will offer webinars, workshops, and “office hours” for groups to meet with financial experts. The data collected through these services will help us better understand trends, needs, and opportunities, as we support the field through recovery over the next several months and years.

The Council is a founding member of NJCAR (New Jersey Cultural Alliance for Response), the first-in-the-nation alliance to include both the arts and history sectors, created to empower New Jersey's cultural communities to preserve assets and sustain operations before, during, and after a disaster. The Council is also part of the national team that created the Performing Arts Readiness (PAR) project, specifically designed to assist the performing arts sector. While neither network was founded with pandemic preparations or mitigation strategies in mind, both have pivoted to include health and safety training, insurance issue guidance, and venue, patron, and collection protection.

Local impact, sustaining communities, celebrating culture:

The Council will significantly increase funding of and active collaboration with the statewide network of 21 County Arts Agencies, and the State Association of County Cultural & Heritage Agencies. As the SAGE e-Grant and database system continues to develop, the Council plans to integrate the re-grantee data from the Counties and the Local Arts Program (LAP), into the Council's information systems. A deeper understanding of the current and potential reach and capacity of the County Arts Agencies will help the Council strengthen local networks, and ultimately improve effectiveness in reaching traditionally under-resourced communities, neighborhoods, and populations.

As demand increases for local funding, the Council will place renewed focus on the role of the LAP partners in providing meaningful support for low-capacity, high-impact arts organizations, and

projects. Ongoing collaboration on initiatives such as technical assistance, outreach, lifelong learning, and others is critical to the success of these partnerships.

The Council's decades-old, multi-faceted Folk Arts Program is poised to serve New Jersey cultural communities, artists, and families in unique and robust ways. Greater investment in the network of five Folklife centers will help to bring these hubs of cultural activity together, and further promote, support, and integrate the work of New Jersey artists. In partnership with the NEA, the Council will continue to energize the Folk Arts in education program, undergo fieldwork for a possible 6th Folklife Center, and continue to expand upon the Folk Arts for Homebound (FAFH) program. FAFH pairs traditional artists with homebound individuals and their caregivers, furthering the Council's commitment to the healing and restorative power of the arts. Like so many others, this program innovatively shifted to include virtual offerings last year, ensuring the continued delivery of invaluable human, creative connection for vulnerable populations.

Additionally, work is underway to better align the support of Folk Artists as an integral part of the Council's Artist Services strategy. The Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program plays a unique role in helping to ensure the survival of valued traditional artforms in New Jersey communities. As part of the ongoing efforts to find ways to highlight Folk Arts Masters and their work with Apprentices, the Council will continue the creation of Passing it On, the quarterly electronic publication that chronicles community based, culturally specific artforms and artists statewide. Additionally, new collaborations are underway between the Council's Folklife Centers and the 21 County Arts Agencies.

Arts promotion, advocacy, and leveraging resources:

The Council will continue to promote, educate, and communicate to stakeholders and the public about the unique recovery needs of the sector, and the critical role of the arts in a true statewide recovery. We will represent key Council priorities in national, regional, state, and local initiatives such as arts education, access and equity, artist services, health and healing, cross-cultural understanding, economic vibrancy, overall quality of life, etc.

As the Co-Chair of the Governor's Arts and Culture Recovery Working Group, the Council Executive Director will continue to help amplify the relief and recovery needs of the field and solidify channels of communication among State leaders and arts leaders statewide.

The strength of the Council's services relies, in large part, on the partnerships – within the arts and across sectors – to identify needs and capitalize on opportunities for solutions across all priority areas. We will continue to build coalition with private and corporate philanthropic leaders to leverage critical support for the sector. We will seek to foster new opportunities for connection to and between artists and organizations of all sizes to facilitate dialogue, capacity building, and resources for recovery. An important area of focus is the New Jersey Arts and Culture Recovery Fund, of which the Council is a founder and Steering Committee member.

We will continue to build on our effective strategies in public relations, including Council meetings and event coordination, Council member public (virtual or in-person) appearances, arts marketing, and promotion. Special attention will be paid in FY22 to the Council's website (pending DOS support),

social media presence, online publications, and the following strategic partnership projects: State of the Arts; Keep Jersey Arts Alive; and Discover Jersey Arts. Discover Jersey Arts has experienced strong and steady growth over the past three years and continues to align its priorities with those of the Council, especially as we strategically reposition the program to be more nimble and provide customized services to the field. Keep Jersey Arts Alive (formerly Art Matters), has undergone a complete redesign and is the perfect megaphone for driving home the value of the arts industry.

The Council will continue to work with state and local government, as well as private entities, to establish and sustain cross-sector partnerships that strengthen the arts industry and New Jersey communities as a whole. Ongoing initiatives that focus on creative placemaking, economic development, and cultural tourism will continue, with an eye toward promoting the arts industry as central to all facets of New Jersey life. The Council will continue to work closely with the South Jersey Cultural Alliance, harnessing their unique position as a hub for resources, services, and promotion of the arts in the eight southern counties.

Arts education and lifelong learning:

Continued investment in arts education through direct grants, cosponsored projects and strategic services for the field have helped us make great strides in the last year that we intend to build on. With a seat at national and statewide tables, the Council plays a role in shaping broad policy and planning, including the development of guidance for the inclusion of quality arts education in schools, especially as administrators, teachers, students, and families aim to address the complex challenges brought on by the pandemic. This year, the Council also maintains a role on the National Arts Education Partnership Advisory Council, serving as the first-ever State Arts Agency representative.

Despite the challenges of mounting an all-virtual program, three Council cosponsored programs found meaningful ways to engage students, educators, and artists, and even experience program growth. New Jersey Poetry Out loud landed in the top five nationally, once again, for program participation, successfully created the first online classroom, and broadened access by welcoming in community organizations and libraries, a practice that will continue as we welcome a new program partner this year. The Artists in Education Residency Grant Program (AIE) continues to adapt to the ever-changing needs of schools. An increase in applications last year means we will serve more students, schools, and educators either virtually or in-person in FY22. Launched in FY20, the Artists Professional Learning Institute (APLI), was re-launched last year as an entirely virtual program and saw impressive growth, serving three-quarters more participants than the year before. This year, the program will again focus on connecting teaching artists and teachers to quality, arts-based professional and creative development.

FY22 will see the continued investment in the New Jersey Creative Aging Project. With support from the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and Aroha Philanthropies, we will maintain focus on bringing artists and senior care practitioners together to share best practices, strengthen existing resources, and build new opportunities for training and programming statewide.

The Council will continue to focus on essential arts education programs and services through targeted grant categories and cosponsored arts education initiatives. Council-supported arts education

programs are involved in purposeful Collective Impact work in the state - including Arts Ed NJ, Arts Ed Newark, and Count Basie Center for the Arts. The NEA's national strategy for arts education through Collective Impact is integral in our arts education support to communities, schools and arts organizations. Our Arts Basic to Education, Arts Education Special Initiative, and cosponsored project grants in arts education all continue to help make important strides toward quality arts education for every child, and quality arts education and lifelong learning for people of all ages.

Continuing over 40 years of excellence in public art:

In FY22, the Council will continue to seek out public installation and commission opportunities for New Jersey artists, capitalizing on new and existing partnerships that help expand the scope of opportunity beyond what the Council's or Arts Inclusion resources can provide. As more communities recognize the role of public art in creating dynamic gathering spaces and opportunities for complex civil discourse, artists are challenged in new and exciting ways.

As communities attempt to heal and recover, access to the arts in public spaces is increasingly important. As residents, tourists, and arts patrons seek safe arts experiences, the Council will continue working to highlight New Jersey's vast collection of public art and provide more opportunities for New Jersey artists to showcase their art in public spaces. We will continue the successful TRANSITIONAL Art Project (TAP), a partnership between the Council and NJ Transit, with exhibitions planned for transit areas across the state. In addition to showcasing new pieces of public art, the Council will continue promoting its Public Art Archive, which highlights works of art statewide.

The Council's Communications and Artist Services teams will continue to work with commissioning state agencies and others to promote calls for artists through the Call for Entry (CaFE) online system. Utilizing CaFE helps ensure opportunities are well-known and widely accessible. Simultaneously, the Council's Artist Services team will continue to advance the many projects currently underway.

Working again with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the Council will help develop a temporary public art program that connects community organizations and artists to engage the public in conversations about climate resilience. And with the New Jersey Historical Commission, the Council will develop a multi-site public art and history proposal to mark the 250th anniversary of the formal founding of the United States. Under New Jersey's larger initiative to mark this anniversary, historians and artists will collaboratively connect historical narratives to the contemporary landscape of New Jersey.