

# Year in Review

Fiscal Year 2024



# About

# Us

The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, created in 1966, is a division of the NJ Department of State and a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Council was established to encourage and foster public interest in the arts, enlarge public and private resources devoted to the arts, promote freedom of expression in the arts, and facilitate the inclusion of art in every public building in New Jersey. The Council believes the arts are central to every element we value most in a modern society including: human understanding, cultural and civic pride, strong communities, excellent schools, lifelong learning, creative expression, and economic opportunity.

## Commitment to Public Benefit & Equity

In New Jersey, we know that diversity is one of our greatest strengths. The NJ State Council on the Arts embraces the principles of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion in all aspects of our work. With a focus on learning, data, and accountability, we will continue to assess and challenge inequities, identify gaps in engagement and service, and focus on the details that shape change.

**“New Jersey has long been a forerunner in the arts, whether it’s supporting tens of thousands of jobs, generating hundreds of millions of dollars in economic impact, or leading the nation in arts education policy. I am especially proud of the arts community’s unceasing creativity and the determined and thoughtful efforts of the Arts Council in supporting our state’s essential creative sector.”**

**Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way, Secretary of State**

**“At the State Arts Council, we understand that the arts are vital to a healthy society. Research shows that the arts make our neighborhoods and our state as a whole, better and stronger. The arts provide an opportunity for people from all backgrounds to engage with one another and to share ideas and stories that can change lives.”**

**Elizabeth Mattson, Chair**

**“Through ongoing communication with partners and constituents, the Council continues to evolve programs and services to better serve the people of New Jersey. This report highlights some of the ways state arts funding has helped New Jersey communities, families, and industries contribute to and enjoy a vibrant quality of life this year.”**

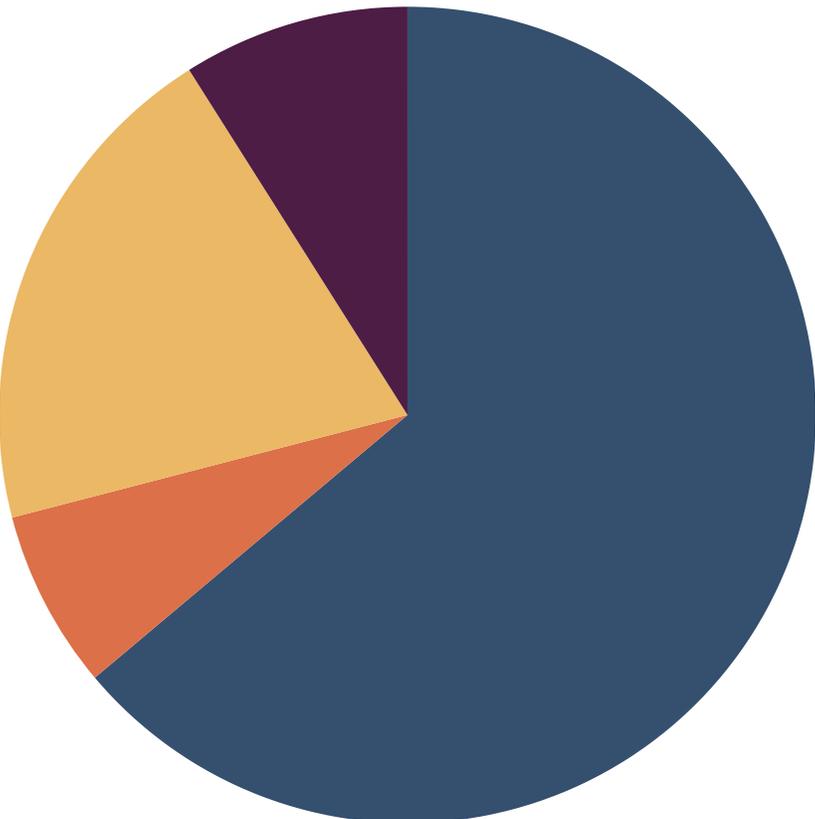
**Allison Tratner, Executive Director**



# FY24 Grants

# Snapshot

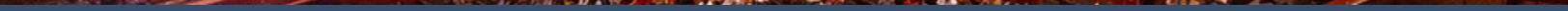
State support for the arts comes from the Hotel/Motel Occupancy Fee, a renewable revenue source the arts industry helps to generate, as well as a partnership grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. With a combined \$33,545,200, a record 957 grants and customized services reached all 21 counties in support of NJ communities, families, and individuals.



- Operating Grants**  
\$19,836,476  
119 grants
- Local Arts Program**  
\$6,233,800  
621 grants
- Arts Projects**  
\$2,787,500  
46 grants
- Individual Artists**  
\$2,200,00  
171 grants

# FY24 Grants

## Snapshot



### ▶▶ Operating Grants

Multiyear, flexible support to help nonprofit arts organizations pay for basic operations.

### ▶▶ Local Arts Program

New Jersey's network of 21 County Arts Agencies (CAAs) extended the reach of and access to Council dollars. CAAs support local arts development programs and regrant funds to community-based organizations and projects.

### ▶▶ Arts Projects

Based on changing needs in the field, new and renewed programs focused on arts education, healthy aging, professional development, cultural access, public art, economic development, and more.

### ▶▶ Individual Artists

Individual Artist Fellowships provided means to sustain and strengthen the careers of artists at the heart of our state's creative industries. The inaugural Heritage Fellowships recognized artistic excellence, lifetime achievement, and contributions to New Jersey's traditional arts heritage.



Expanded operating grants by 10.5% through cost-of-business increases.



Exceeded South Jersey funding target by **\$430,561** for a total investment of **\$7,987,286**.

**93%** of FY24 funds provided grants reaching all **21 counties**.



# 24% increase

**IN FUNDING FOR  
INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS**



**As the largest funder of the arts in New Jersey, the majority of Council grants provide the type of funding most challenging for nonprofits to find: multiyear, flexible support to help organizations pay for basic operations in service to their missions.**

“Symphony in C is most grateful to the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for their steadfast support through General Operating funding. This crucial support not only sustains our daily operations but also **empowers us to foster creativity, enrich our community, and champion the transformative power of the arts.**”

**Pamela Brant, President, Symphony in C**

“General operating support funding is the lifeblood of People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos. With this crucial support, we can empower individuals through literature, foster community connections, and ensure our transformative programs reach those who need them most. It's not just funding.

**It's the foundation of providing impactful services to the community.”**

**Rebecca FrancoMartin, Executive Director, People & Stories/Gente y Cuentos**

**“Council support has allowed the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company to provide consistent and high quality arts programming to raise visibility in diverse neighborhoods and among people with special needs.”**

**Andy Chiang, Executive Director, Nai-Ni Dance Company**



# Programs &

# Services

Building partnerships across sectors to leverage investment in New Jersey's communities extends the reach of state dollars to serve hundreds of arts businesses, thousands of culture-workers, and millions of diverse visitors and residents. The Fiscal Year 2024 Programs and Services sustained the Council's commitment to equitable, inclusive public service, centered on increasing quality of life for all people.

- ▶▶ **Artist Services**
- ▶▶ **Arts Education & Lifelong Learning**

- ▶▶ **Creative Communities**
- ▶▶ **Folk & Traditional Arts**



**Artist**

**Services**

**“I really appreciate the work that you put into being a**

**hub of**

**information**

**and community for working artists in New Jersey.”**

The Business of Being an Artist Participant

## ► At a Glance

Artists are the creative capital of our communities. The Council supports artists in several important ways, through programs that recognize, encourage, and showcase their talents. In addition to providing direct funding to individual artists, the Council supports initiatives such as professional development sessions, paid calls for art, and showcase opportunities.

**160**

artists from 18 counties awarded through Individual Artist Fellowship program, the largest investment in the program’s history

**874**

artists engaged through professional development programs

**287**

finalists featured in the state Senior Citizen Art Show



## ► Programs & Services

Arts Annual Exhibition  
Fellowship Showcase  
Individual Artist Fellowships  
Making it Public  
Public Arts Inclusion

Public Art Partnerships:  
NJ Department of Environmental Protection  
NJ TRANSIT  
Port Authority of NY/NJ  
Senior Citizen Art Show  
The Business of Being an Artist



**“Art is life.**

**Music is life.**

**Theatre is life.**

**[...] And if we don’t have art, then we’re not really living.”**

**Lucas Wilson  
2024 NJ Poetry Out Loud Champion**

**Arts Education &**

**Lifelong Learning**

**►► At a Glance**

The Council has a longstanding goal to ensure all New Jerseyans have access to quality, lifelong arts experiences and education. The Council works with an array of partners to place teaching artists and arts programs in schools and community settings, supports training for educators and artists, and participates in regional and national affinity groups to ensure New Jersey remains at the forefront of arts education and lifelong learning.



**10,587**

**NJ students that participated in Poetry Out Loud, placing NJ 3rd in the nation for student participation**

**251**

**teaching artists engaged in arts education professional development**

**29**

**number of Creative Aging Initiative grantees representing arts, culture, and community organizations**

**►► Programs & Services**

- Age-Friendly Advisory Council
- AIE Residency Program
- Arts Professional Learning Institute
- Arts Where You Are
- Communities of Practice
- Creative Aging Initiative

- Justice-Impacted Youth & the Arts
- Poetry Out Loud
- National Arts Education Partnership Advisory Council
- National Assembly of State Arts Agencies Arts Education Working Group

"Increased funding from the Arts Council has made it possible for programming in Union County to grow and thrive. Our LAP re-grantees alone produce more than a thousand activities annually. By any standard, the artistic level here is truly impressive, and the

**NJ State Council on the Arts**

**makes it possible."**

Kathleen Kakaletis  
Union County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs



**Creative**

**Communities**

## ► At a Glance

Recognizing that the arts are central to all facets of life, the Council prioritizes grant and service opportunities that encourage innovation, engage new voices, and foster collaboration. Working with state and local government, as well as private entities, the Council establishes and sustains cross-sector partnerships that strengthen the arts industry and New Jersey communities as a whole. Ongoing initiatives focus on creative placemaking, economic development, arts access, equity and inclusion, and cultural tourism.

**430**

**arts workers benefitted from the Critical Financial Services professional development series**

**148**

**organizations from 20 counties participated in the Families First Discovery Pass, the arts access program's highest enrollment to date**

**600**

**grants to community-based organizations through the Local Arts Program**



## ► Programs & Services

- ArtsPay NJ
- Communities of Practice
- Council of NJ Grantmakers Culture Funders
- Critical Financial Services
- Cultural Access Network
- Families First Discovery Pass
- Local Arts Program

- NJ Arts & Culture Administrators of Color
- NJ Arts & Culture Renewal Fund
- NJ Cultural Alliance for Response
- NJ Mayors Committee on Arts & Culture
- Performing Arts Readiness
- State of the Arts
- Transit Village Initiative

# Folk &

# Traditional Arts



## ► At a Glance

New Jersey's many geographic and demographic settings are interwoven with ethnic, cultural, and occupational networks, creating a dynamic array of communities. In them, folk and traditional arts are valued ways of expressing identity and strengthening group ties. To support this cultural richness, the Council supports a multifaceted Folk & Traditional Arts Program.



**5 Folklife Centers help preserve and highlight the great diversity of New Jersey's folk arts traditions practiced across the state, including but not limited to:**

- African American Hair Artistry
- Andean Music
- Chinese Calligraphy
- Decoy Carving
- East African Storytelling
- Estonian Folk Dance
- Indian Tabla
- Irish Flute
- Japanese Bunka
- Klezmer Music
- Nanticoke Leni-Lanape Dancing
- Native American Pine Needle Baskets
- Peruvian Mask Making
- Puerto Rican Bomba y Plena
- Russian Embroidery
- South Jersey Basket Weaving
- Turkish Bağlama
- Ukrainian Pysanki
- West African Percussion

## ► Programs & Services

- Folk & Traditional Arts at Home
- Folk Arts in Education
- Heritage Fellowships
- NY/NJ Folk Arts Roundtable
- Passing it On

- NJ Folklife Centers Network
  - Down Jersey Folklife Center
  - Folklife Center of Northern NJ
  - Folklife Program for NJ
  - Jersey Shore Folklife Center
  - Perkins Folklife Center



# Public Art in New Jersey Communities

Public art meets New Jersey’s residents where they are – in their neighborhoods, transit stations, even on crosswalks on their streets. These interventions bring art to people in their daily lives, and through strategic partnerships and collaborations, communities are able to see themselves represented in locally made works. A key priority for the Council’s public art projects is to open doors for more artists from a greater diversity of backgrounds.

**168 artists participated in Making It Public, a free, multiweek professional development series designed to support artists of all disciplines in exploring their art making practice and expanding into public spaces.**

**85 administrators representing nonprofits, local and regional arts councils, arts and entertainment districts, and units of government participated in Making It Public, which provided resources to help strengthen local capacity for public art.**



“The TRANSITIONAL Art Project offers a fresh perspective on the

**transformative**

**power of art**

**and continues to add a vibrant new dimension to our facilities and surrounding communities.”**

Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti  
NJ Department of Transportation Commissioner and NJ  
TRANSIT Board Chair



**For more information:**

**[artscouncil.nj.gov](http://artscouncil.nj.gov)**

## **FY24 Council Members**

Elizabeth A. Mattson, Chair | Carol Ann Herbert, 1st Vice Chair | Felicia Grant, 2nd Vice Chair

Sharon Burton Turner, Ofelia Garcia, Lana Gold Walder, Joyce C. Goore, Jeremy Grunin, Gina Hulings, Dolores A. Kirk, Ruth Lipper, Kevin M. O'Brien, Dr. Michael Penna, Vivian Scott Chew

Ex Officio Members: Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way, Senator Holly T. Schepisi, Assemblyman James J. Kennedy

## **Council Staff**

Allison Tratner, Executive Director | Stella Baldwin, Program Officer | Michelle Baxter-Schaffer, Director of Communications | Christopher Benincasa, Communications Manager | Andrew Binger, Program Officer | Danielle Bursk, Director of Community Partnerships & Artist Services | Samantha Clarke, Program Officer | Lindsay Dandeo, Program Officer, Access Coordinator | Diane Felcyn, Program Officer | Jessica Gaines, Program Officer | Tammy R. Herman, Director of Grants & Strategies | Stephanie Nerbak, Artist Services Manager | Irene Wells, Executive Assistant | Robert Worshinski, Director of Operations & Technical Assistance

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