

CREATIVES REBUILD NEW YORK

Funder Roadmaps

Introduction

This document outlines CRNY's recommendations for future investments. These opportunities are based on the findings from our research and evaluation work; meetings with the broader field and organizations like ours who are doing artist employment and guaranteed income work; and the stories and testimonies we have been collecting from the 2700 artists and over 100 organizations that we funded. These opportunities are also aligned with our [Policy Playbook](#) and reinforce these core principles:

Carry social, disability, economic, and racial justice across investments:

- Focus on those who face structural barriers to financial security, including Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC), LBGTIAQP+, legal system involved, rural, caregivers, Deaf/Disabled, Transgender, and immigrant artists and other individuals;
- Employ an expansive definition of artists that includes culture bearers;
- Seek out and support small BIPOC -serving and -led organizations;
- Provide funds for multi-lingual access and ASL interpreters for all public programming;
- Consider community wealth building as an overarching frame for investments; and
- Support equitable evaluation models, including community-led participatory research.

Embed guaranteed income values in grantmaking:

- Push against the focus on meritocracy in arts and cultural funding; and
- Promote trust-based, unconditional support to individuals, that is consistent over time.

Embed artist employment program values in grantmaking:

- Support work that requires artists to be paid as employees and paid appropriate wages;
- Invest in the essential work artists can do in their communities – especially across sectors;
- Break the power dynamic between organizations and artists by having joint applications, center relationality, and swap reports for conversations; and
- Use innovative platforms such as Tribeworks to allow small and volunteer-run organizations to participate in employment programs or other funders.

Fund advocacy efforts to reach systemic change:

- Create braided funding opportunities within foundations to support cross-sector work;
- Support work that leverages policy and builds relationships with policymakers; and
- Support regional movement building.

Care for artists as workers:

- Share power and co-design with practitioners to understand the needs of the field first;
- Support work that moves at the speed of trust. Transactions are necessary but not sufficient;
- Support worker cooperatives and artist collectives;
- Continue to help practitioners connect with one another, share stories, and knowledge; and
- Prioritize transformative, caring support for artist worker solidarity and labor acknowledgement.

Table of Contents

- **Workforce Development** (pg.3)
 - Support for Working Artists
 - National Arts Worker Cooperative and Portable Benefits Pilot (pg. 4)
 - Cultural Worker Bill of Rights Adoption (pg. 5)
 - Artist Jobs + Training
 - Expand NYS/NYC Public Artist in Residence and Cultural Policy Fellow Programs (pg. 6)
 - Continue Artist Employment Program(s) (pg. 7)
 - Re-launch NYC Artist Corps (pg. 8)
- **Economic Security for Artists** (pg. 9)
 - Cash
 - Continue Guaranteed Income for Artists Program(s) (pg. 10)
 - Increase NYSCA/NYFA Individual Artist Funding (pg.11)
 - Community-Distributed GI for Artists in Rural and Indigenous Communities (pg.12)
 - Advocacy and Policy Change
 - NYS Cash Alliance (pg.13)
 - Guaranteed Income Grassroots Organizations: General Operating Support (pg.14)
 - Launch a National GI Pooled Fund (pg. 15)
- **Research** (pg. 16)
 - Advocacy and Policy Change
 - Continue the Portrait of NY State Artists Survey (pg. 17)
 - Public Benefits Interactions with Income and Cash Programs: Research and Advocacy (pg. 18)
 - Programmatic
 - Guaranteed Income for Artists Longitudinal Research (pg. 19)
 - Artist Employment Program Longitudinal Research (pg. 20)
- **Arts and Culture Ecosystem** (pg. 21)
 - Advocacy and Policy Change
 - NYS Creative Economy Plan (pg. 22)
 - NYS Advocacy and Organizing Collaborative, *Voices for A Creative New York* (pg. 23)
 - National Arts Policy Alliance (pg. 24)
 - Infrastructure
 - Public Benefits Strategy and Navigation: Demonstration (pg. 25)
 - Deaf and Disability Access (pg. 26)

Note: The [Policy Playbook](#) has additional funding opportunities.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

National Worker Cooperative & Portable Benefits Pilot

Strategy: Workforce Development

Focus Area	Support for Working Artists
Activity	Portable Benefits, Employment for Artists
Scale	National
CRNY Contact	Sarah Calderon, sarah@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Tribeworks and Artists At Work
Investment Estimate	Local foundations provide \$500K - \$2M to launch Tribeworks and AAW with your community of artists.
Source	AEP Working Group Recommendations ; HR&A/CRNY Policy Playbook

Summary

To support artist and cultural workers, there are infrastructure needs that each worker confronts. It might be benefits support, payroll coordination, administration of healthcare benefits, financial services, income smoothing, wage recovery, or wage setting guidelines, and the need for worker power. CRNY engaged Tribeworks to provide W2 employment and healthcare benefits for our artists during their AEP work. Tribeworks is also a national worker cooperative for creatives and cultural workers and can provide income smoothing and portable benefits.

Artists At Work has been important to the artist employment field as it builds local artists communities and employment models that truly understand local needs and places.

Bringing these two organizations together to expand this work is key to artists' livelihoods and their ability to work and have the worker benefits that we all deserve. Creating a national model for this work will include local support and cooperative building coupled with national infrastructure to ensure access to portable benefits.

Cultural Worker Bill of Rights Adoption

Strategy: Workforce Development

Focus Area	Support for Working Artists
Activity	Artist Employment Base-building, Policy
Scale	New York Regions, New York State, National
CRNY Contact	Christopher Mulè, Chris@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Freelancers Union, New York Communities for Change, Action Group Network; Worker Justice Center of New York; ACLU of New York, Music Workers Alliance; Whipoorwill Arts; Arts NY State, Cultural Workers United; Tribeworks
Investment Estimate	TBD, depending on the scale of the work
Source	AEP Working Group Recommendations and the Cultural Worker Bill of Rights created by CRNY and a team of artists

Summary

Based on the AEP Working Group Recommendations, CRNY worked with a group of cultural workers to draft the Artist and Cultural Worker Bill of Rights. To get this into the mainstream, there needs to be grassroots organizing and mobilizing efforts led by organizations that do this type of work. Funding this work will result in building a local base of cultural workers and could lead to the building of artist worker cooperatives, advocacy efforts, and possibly policy change.

Funds would need to support regional gatherings over the next year, marketing and communications, paid artist-leaders/consultants, lobbyist support, and travel.

Expand NYS/NYC Public Artist in Residence and Cultural Policy Fellow Programs

Strategy: Workforce Development

Focus Area	Artist Jobs + Training
Activity	Employment for Artists; Cross Sector Work (arts/non arts); Artists Impacting Community
Scale	New York City, New York State
CRNY Contact	Sarah Calderon, sarah@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and New York State Council on the Arts
Investment Estimate	Two, \$1M investments – one to NYSCA and one to NYC DCLA – can support 10 artists with salaries and benefits for one year. A small grant of ~\$50K could jumpstart the cohort of artists already working in government.
Source	HR&A/CRNY Policy Playbook , Stanford University’s work embedding cultural policy fellows in state government agencies and building on the work of NYC’s PAIR and states such as Minnesota and Washington who have embedded artists in residence in state agencies.

Summary

Embedding artists across city, municipality, and Tribal government agencies can create deep impact for communities and help to create more arts-friendly practices and funding streams within government. These models already exist in NYC and are being launched in NY State via Arts Pluribus Unum.

NYC Public Artist in Residence (PAIR) is a municipal residency program that embeds artists in city government to propose and implement creative solutions to pressing civic challenges. Approximately 25 artists have been placed in this capacity over the last 10 years, but to increase the impact of this work, more artists per year as a cohort, sustained over time, is essential.

New York State is currently piloting an artist in residence program as part of the Arts Pluribus Unum initiative, investing \$1.5M for three agencies to hire artists. We recommend expanding this program through a public private partnership to allow for greater collaboration, learning, and technical assistance support for both the artists and the government agencies embarking on this work for the first time. Arts and cultural policy fellows could also be placed at the Regional Economic Development Councils and Workforce Development Boards. These policy fellows can support each agency or council to understand how to support the creative economy with the funds and programs that already exist.

Finally, artists already are working in government – at every level. Consider a program that elevates artists working in city government already, encourages them to use their ‘artist hats’ daily, and brings them together across agencies to meet and collaborate.

Continue Artist Employment Program(s)

Strategy: Workforce Development

Focus Area	Artist Jobs + Training
Activity	Employment for Artists, Artists Impacting Community
Scale	New York State
CRNY Contact	Bella Desai, bella@creativesrebuildny.org ; Chris Mule, chris@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Organizations across NY State and Artists who want to work in communities
Investment Estimate	<p>\$8.32M per year at the \$65k salary + 28% overhead (assuming orgs are putting in matching funds for their own operating).</p> <p>\$2.7M per year at the \$65k salary + 28% overhead for artists and \$50k for organizations, and 5% of costs for Tribeworks.</p>
Source	AEP Final Check-In meetings with participants

Summary

Artists and organizations in the CRNY Artist Employment Program (AEP) want to continue their work together. In addition, CRNY has received many requests from funders and organizations who want to launch their own Artist Employment Programs.

For those interested in continuing to fund the organizations that have been part of the AEP for the past two years, CRNY recommends supporting these partnerships with matching grants. The funds will be used for artists' salaries and benefits and the matching funds are provided by the organizations to support their work with the artist(s). There are approximately 100 artists and 50 organizations who want to continue their collaborations.

Launching a new collaborative Artist Employment Program is also possible but may take some incentivizing and initial support for the organizations as well. You may also need to fund an organization that can take on the W2 employment and provide benefits such as Tribeworks. This investment will include funds for the organization and Tribeworks. Launching a program for 24 artists and 12 organizations may be a good size to start with and is represented in the second investment estimate above.

Re-Launch NYC Artist Corps

Strategy: Workforce Development

Focus Area	Artist Jobs + Training
Activity	Employment for Artists, Artists Impacting Community
Scale	New York State
CRNY Contact	Sarah Calderon, sarah@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	NYC DCLA
Investment Estimate	\$5000/artist @ 3000 artists = \$15M/year + overhead for distribution partners
Source	HR&A/CRNY Policy Playbook

Summary

The New York City Artist Corps was a historic investment in artists by the City of New York. The \$25 million program was created to provide relief to the City's hard-hit arts community and reinvigorate arts and culture as part of the City's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to giving New Yorkers opportunities to experience a diverse range of free cultural programming across the boroughs, City Artist Corps ensured that more than 3,000 working artists were supported in their own right, recognizing their labor as critical to the City's recovery.

Through a number of partners, City Artist Corps provided thousands of grants and support to artists in all disciplines across New York City. Making the City Artist Corps a part of annual funding for artists via a weighted lottery could ignite years of creative work in local communities and make for more vibrant places.

ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR ARTISTS

Continue Guaranteed Income for Artists Program(s)

Strategy: Economic Security for Artists

Focus Area	Cash
Activity	Cash to Artists
Scale	New York State
CRNY Contact	Maura Cuffie-Peterson, maura@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Friends of Ganondagan, Indie Theater Fund, Black Arts Collective, Dance NYC, The Laundromat Project, Local Sound Collaborative Rochester NY; MAP Fund; NY Loc Arts Councils; Asian American Arts Alliance; A.R.T./New York; Black Public Media; LACs; Dance/NYC; Firelight Media; Flushing Town Hall; New Music USA; Poets & Writers; etc. Funding distribution support – Community Financial Resources, SteadyApp, GiveDirectly, MocaFi
Investment Estimate	\$1000/mo. For 24 months - \$24k/artist To support the same or another cohort of artists = \$57.6m Funds for organizations to collaborate, learn, and have capacity to distribute; \$100k/org
Source	Discussions with GI recipients

Summary

Artists who received guaranteed income from CRNY for 18 months universally would like this safety net to continue. We found increased well-being, that artists use the funds to pay their bills and prioritize debt, that artists choose work that works for them, and that artists have more time and space for caregiving.

A second round of GI for artists in NY state is possible. One opportunity is to continue to fund the 2400 artists who were already receiving GI for 18 months. Another opportunity is to choose artists who already applied to CRNY and were not chosen for this round of GI. (There were over 22,000 applicants). Finally, there is an opportunity to launch a new GI program for artists and to experiment with the amount of months, the amount of funds provided, and possibly the population of artists served.

This investment will yield an understanding of the impact of GI for artists' various political and place-based subsystems. One could also support the capacity of intermediaries, service organizations, and arts councils in New York State to fund individual artists.

Increase NYSCA/NYFA Individual Artist Funding

Strategy: Economic Security for Artists

Focus Area	Cash
Activity	Cash to Artists
Scale	NY State
CRNY Contact	Sarah Calderon, sarah@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	New York State Council on the Arts and New York Foundation for the Arts
Investment Estimate	Double this amount - provide \$1M in funds to fund at least 180 artists per year. Recommend that discipline focus be lifted.
Source	GI Working Group Recommendations on incorporating GI values into philanthropic models; HR&A/CRNY Policy Playbook

Summary

The NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship is an \$8,000 unrestricted cash grant available to artists living in New York State and/or one of the Tribal Nations located therein. Currently serving ~90 artists each year and rotating between 15 total disciplines (5 each year). Providing additional funds for NYSCA/NYFA for these fellowships would provide direct, no strings attached, funding to artists.

Community Distributed GI for Artists to Rural & Indigenous Communities

Strategy: Economic Security for Artists

Focus Area	Cash
Activity	Cash to Artists
Scale	National
CRNY Contact	Maura Cuffie-Peterson, maura@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Waymakers Collective, The Waterers , Friends of Ganondagan, Arts Council of the Southern Finger Lakes, Hummingbird Indigenous Family Services
Investment Estimate	<p>\$5.4M - \$9.5M</p> <p>\$5.4M - \$9M 3-5 programs, supporting 50 artists with \$1,000 a month for 36 months</p> <p>\$500K Collaborate and learn from each other as well as spread learnings and how-to lessons to others</p>
Source	GI Working Group Recommendations , discussions with GI national leaders, and based on success of ArtPlace's Local Control, Local Fields

Summary

Invest in 3-5 regions across the U.S., focusing on indigenous, rural, and underinvested regions, to implement their own longer term Guaranteed Income for Artists’ programs. This investment will yield an understanding of the impact of GI for artists across various political and place-based subsystems. Further knowledge of the impact of GI for artists in rural and Indigenous communities along with considering GI as a form of reparations.

NYS Cash Alliance

Strategy: Economic Security for Artists

Focus Area	Advocacy and Policy Change
Activity	Policy, Advocacy, Guaranteed Income Base-building
Scale	New York State
CRNY Contact	Maura Cuffie-Peterson, maura@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	NYS Cash Alliance: Anchor members include WIN , Vocal-NY, Children’s Defense Fund, The Bridge Project, Center for Employment Opportunities, Economic Security Project, BLIS Collective, Citizen Action
Investment Estimate	\$350K - \$500K CRNY has already funded this organization with a \$100K seed grant
Source	NYS Cash Alliance Funder Memo and recommendations from Economic Security Project's Guaranteed Income Blueprint

Summary

Founded by CRNY in 2023, the NYS Cash Alliance is a collaborative of organizations working together across NY State to advance cash policies and guaranteed income for all. Composed of guaranteed income pilot programs, grassroots advocacy organizations, elected officials, and economic justice scholars; the NYS Cash Alliance is poised to grow and continue its work. In 2024, the Alliance grew its membership, hosted a series of events to build a base of supporters and educate elected officials, and endorsed a package of policies alongside 100 signatures of leading organizations across the state via a legislative letter delivered to Gov. Hochul in December 2024.

CRNY recommends funding this organization to support their legislative campaigns from 2025 - 2028 to preserve existing safety net policies in NYS and to win a permanent Guaranteed Income for low-income New Yorkers. Cementing a policy win in New York State is in parallel with the necessary political campaign and base-building infrastructure required to ensure New York sustains itself as a leader in the cash policy space.

Guaranteed Income Grassroots Organizations: General Operating Support

Strategy: Economic Security for Artists

Focus Area	Advocacy and Policy Change
Activity	Guaranteed Income Base-building
Scale	National
CRNY Contact	Maura Cuffie-Peterson, maura@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Income Movement
Investment Estimate	\$750,000
Source	GI Working Group Recommendations and discussions with GI national leaders

Summary

Bolster current grassroots organizing groups to ensure artists are included, as workers, and as deserving constituent group in the larger movement. Base-building has been named by all movement leaders as the top priority moving into 2025 and beyond.

Supporting these organizations with general operating funds sustains the movement meaningfully. It provides a home for artist-organizers, campaign strategists, and all organizers are supported with leadership development, knowledge sharing, and focused connections to the national movement.

Launch a National GI Pooled Fund

Strategy: Economic Security for Artists

Focus Area	Advocacy and Policy Change
Activity	Cash to Artists
Scale	National
CRNY Contact	Maura Cuffie-Peterson, maura@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Potential Funding Partners: Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, MetLife Foundation, Etsy Foundation, JP Morgan Chase, Wells Fargo Foundation, Citi Foundation, Deutsche Bank Foundation, New York Women’s Foundation
Investment Estimate	\$3M Initial investment, goal to raise \$15M
Source	GI Working Group Recommendations and discussions with GI national leaders

Summary

Modeling the success of the [Earned Income Tax Credit \(EITC\) Pooled Fund](#) through Economic Opportunity Funders.

Accelerate winning GI policy in states through a rapid-response fund and the creation of a table for arts funders to collaborate with non-arts funders on economic justice.

RESEARCH

Continue the Portrait of NY State Artists Survey

Strategy: Research

Focus Area	Advocacy and Policy Change
Activity	Research, Advocacy, Policy
Scale	New York State
CRNY Contact	Jamie Hand, jamie@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	New York State Council on the Arts, Empire State Development, NYS Office of Strategic Workforce Development
Investment Estimate	\$500K: \$100K planning grant in 2025 for lead agency \$200K implementation grant to conduct survey in 2026 \$200K implementation grant to conduct survey in 2028 (\$100K for grassroots outreach corps, \$40K for data analyst, \$40K for admin/revisions, \$20K for publication / dissemination)
Source	HR&A/CRNY Policy Playbook ; National Archive of Data on Arts & Culture

Summary

New York does not have a centralized, regularly updated data set on creative workers. Consistent and comprehensive data can help policymakers better understand the needs of creative workers, craft more effective workforce development policies, and evaluate progress on programs and strategies that invest in the creative workforce. Developing and maintaining a census of creative workers in New York State represents an opportunity for policymakers to create more accurate cutting-edge data on creative workers than currently available federal data, and opens the door for [arts and labor advocates to deepen and grow their efforts](#) across a wide range of issue areas.

Public Benefits Interactions with Income and Cash Programs: Research and Advocacy

Strategy: Research

Focus Area	Advocacy and Policy Change
Activity	Disability Artistry, Research, Advocacy, Policy, Employment for Artists
Scale	New York State, National
CRNY Contact	Kevin Gotkin, kevin@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	National disability advocacy organizations; Cash movement organizations
Investment Estimate	\$300K: \$100K for national study with guaranteed income programs \$100K for national study with arts and culture employers \$100K for capacity-building for national advocacy infrastructure
Source	Crip Coin: Disability, Public Benefits, and Guaranteed/Basic Income

Summary

Artists who use public benefit programs face a great deal of uncertainty about accepting new jobs and income. Programs like Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) use means-tested eligibility requirements, which can create benefits cliffs that leave artists with fewer resources as they earn more money. Workforce development and guaranteed income initiatives for artists need to be informed by a wider set of data and advocacy efforts to protect artists from these harmful effects.

Guaranteed Income for Artists Longitudinal Research

Strategy: Research

Focus Area	Programs
Activity	Research, Guaranteed Income Base-building
Scale	National, NY State
CRNY Contact	Jamie Hand, jamie@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Indiana University Center for Cultural Affairs & Center for Survey Research
Investment Estimate	\$800K to \$1.2M (\$400K per round of data collection, which includes \$250,000 for artist compensation)
Source	GI Impact Evaluation and GI Working Group Recommendations

Summary

Celebrated for its robust sample size and response rates from over 5,000 artists, there is a unique opportunity to expand the GI Impact Evaluation and continue engaging the 2,400 artists in CRNY’s program -- 1 year, 3 years, 5 years after the program has ended -- to understand longer term outcomes and impacts of GI on artists’ careers and lives. This kind of longitudinal research has been identified as a high priority within the Guaranteed Income Community of Practice nationally and requested by artists themselves. A long-term evaluation would economize on all of the efforts already expended in planning and implementing the short-term evaluation: the survey infrastructure is already set up with CRNY’s partners at Indiana University Center for Survey Research and the lead researchers (Joanna Woronkovicz and Douglas Noonan) are committed to this work, so the majority of funding required will go towards research incentives for artists to stay engaged in the study.

Artist Employment Program Longitudinal Research

Strategy: Research

Focus Area	Programs
Activity	Research, Artist Employment Base-building
Scale	National, NY State
CRNY Contact	Jamie Hand, jamie@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	SUNY Rockefeller Institute
Investment Estimate	\$500K
Source	AEP Impact Evaluations led by Urban Institute and SUNY Rockefeller Institute (forthcoming)

Summary

The impact that artist employment can have on artists years from when they were employed can be palpable. Consider the WPA artists and CETA artists whose impact on our communities and cultures continues today; some artists who were supported by WPA or CETA have become current household names. 300 artists at every stage of their careers were employed for 2 years between 2022 and 2024. Following these artists and their partnering organizations over time to understand the long-term outcomes of this work is key to understanding how to better support artists' livelihoods. Artists who participated as "action researchers" and advisors to the impact evaluations with Urban Institute and SUNY Rockefeller Institute underscored the value of such an approach for artists themselves as well.

The National Endowment for the Arts has already invested in a report by American Institutes for Research to review artist employment programs currently happening across the country. Pairing CRNY's impact evaluation with this work and a longitudinal follow up would create a dynamic body of research findings for the field.

ARTS AND CULTURE ECOSYSTEM

NYS Creative Economy Plan

Strategy: Arts and Culture Ecosystem

Focus Area	Advocacy and Policy Change
Activity	Policy, Cross Sector Work (arts/non arts)
Scale	New York State
CRNY Contact	Jamie Hand, jamie@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Empire State Development, New York State Council on the Arts, "New" New York, HR&A Advisors
Investment Estimate	\$400,000
Source	HR&A/CRNY Policy Playbook

Summary

A starting point for enacting any of the policies in CRNY’s Policy Playbook, a statewide creative economy strategic plan would engage NYS government agencies and elected officials in the next steps to enact policies that support creative workers across the state. The first step is to create and convene a cross-sector, interagency task force modeled on similar efforts in California and Washington State. This task force would then develop a plan that further articulates goals, lines of accountability, funding sources, and priorities specific to all economic regions of the state. Private funding would kickstart the process and incentivize public investment from the legislature.

NYS Advocacy and Organizing Collaborative, *Voices for A Creative New York*

Strategy: Arts and Culture Ecosystem

Focus Area	Advocacy and Policy Change
Activity	Policy, Advocacy
Scale	NY State
CRNY Contact	Sarah Calderon, sarah@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	New York Folklore, Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts NY (NOCD-NY), LxNY Latinx Arts Consortium of NY, Asian American Arts Alliance (A4), IndieSpace, ACE! (Upstate Alliance for the Creative Economy), New York Foundation for the Arts, NYC Arts in Education Roundtable, Tribeworks, Friends of Ganondagan, Arts Services Inc. of Western New York (ASI), Freelancers Union, Onöhsagwë:de' Cultural Center, The Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York, Working Artists and the Greater Economy(W.A.G.E.), Art.coop, New Yorkers for Culture & Arts, Dance/NYC, Actor's Equity Association, Entertainment Community Fund, Black Artists Collective, Rochester Artists Collaborative, 4AArts, ArtsNYS, Hue Arts NYS
Investment Estimate	Provide an investment of \$1m to launch this NY State infrastructure.
Source	Voices for a Creative New York: Advocacy Blueprint

Summary

NY State has no advocacy infrastructure that addresses the needs of the entire state and advocates on behalf of ALL artists and ALL arts and cultural organizations with the state. CRNY has engaged HR&A Advisors, a mission-driven public policy and economic development consulting firm, to help develop a strategy to advance near-term policy priorities and invest in long-term artist advocacy infrastructure in NYS. A collaborative model has been put forward by many of the strongest, leading advocacy organizations in the state and they need funding to build this work; see [Voices for a Creative New York](#) for a detailed description of assets, gaps, and proposed collaborative actions over the next two years.

National Arts Policy Alliance

Strategy: Arts and Culture Ecosystem

Focus Area	Advocacy and Policy Change
Activity	Policy, Advocacy, Cross Sector Work (arts/non arts)
Scale	National
CRNY Contact	Jamie Hand, jamie@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	United States Artists
Investment Estimate	USA is incubating NAPA with funding from Good Chaos, the Barr Foundation, and Creatives Rebuild NY. The NAPA planning process has been co-facilitated by Althea Erickson, Working Matters; Claire Rice, Arts Alliance Illinois; David Holland, WESTAF; and Judilee Reed, United States Artists. A full update on the initial discovery phase and current design phase of the project--including current participants and findings are available here: https://sites.google.com/unitedstatesartists.org/napa/ .
Source	CRNY's support and involvement in national research/advocacy/policy related to individual arts workers. (Jamie participated in the planning and co-design process from Jan-Sept 2024; Sarah from Oct-Dec 2024.)

Summary

Creative work is precarious. Many creative workers struggle with low wages, debt, lack of benefits, and high housing costs. Individual artists need places – both at the state and federal level - where they can both benefit from and organize within to move policies that can support their livelihoods. The National Arts Policy Alliance is a collaborative planning process among artists and field organizations working together to organize and mobilize creative workers in partnership with other justice movements to win economic security for all. As NAPA moves from planning to implementation in 2025, funding is needed to support the coalition's short- and long-term priorities.

Public Benefits Strategy & Navigation: Demonstration

Strategy: Economic Security for Artists

Focus Area	Advocacy & Policy Change
Activity	Cross Sector Work (arts/non arts); Elder and Disability Artistry
Scale	New York State, National
CRNY Contact	Kevin Gotkin, kevin@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Centers for Independent Living; Benefits Counseling Organizations such as Work Without Limits
Investment Estimate	\$500k
Source	Crip Coin: Disability, Public Benefits, and Guaranteed/Basic Income

Summary

Artists need support understanding various safety net programs they use or may be eligible for. When artists accept new forms of income, whether from employment or guaranteed income programs, they face considerable uncertainty understanding the effects on means-tested public benefits like Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, and Section 8. To enhance and expand the impact of existing models of benefits counseling, artists should help lead and design benefits strategy and navigation initiatives in the communities where trust and reach are already possible.

Deaf and Disability Access

Strategy: Arts and Culture Ecosystem

Focus Area	Infrastructure
Activity	Deaf and Disability Artistry; Organizational Change; Accessibility
Scale	New York City, New York Regions, New York State, National
CRNY Contact	Kevin Gotkin, kevin@creativesrebuildny.org
Partners	Access workers; Deaf and disability arts organizations
Investment Estimate	\$600K: \$100K for a cross-institutional demonstration of an access coordination initiative \$50K for capacity-building for ASL interpreters in the arts \$50K for capacity-building for Certified Deaf Interpreters \$200K for a resource hub for high-quality remote and hybrid programming \$100K for Plain Language consultants' capacity-building \$100K for Plain Language trainings
Source	Access Access series; Plain Language for Arts Organizations: A Guide from Creatives Rebuild New York; Deaf and Disabled Artist Employment: Research on Work from Creatives Rebuild New York

Summary

Artists need high-quality and consistent access design for events and meetings, especially disabled and immunocompromised artists that are most impacted by the ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The coordination of access features, especially ASL, needs to be led by Deaf and disabled experts in the long-term planning of organizational offerings. Formats like Plain Language, a way to make written materials more cognitively accessible, are essential for engaging populations like individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Institutions need support on understanding and meeting artists' access needs. Cross-organizational capacity- and infrastructure-building can set the stage for large-scale impact.