

2015 Arts Congress Talking Points

Advocates will deliver the following talking points to legislators during Arts Congress on Tuesday, February 3, 2015.

1. We appreciate the \$1 million allocated to the Arizona Commission on the Arts from interest earned on the state's Rainy Day Fund in both FY14 and FY15.

Through strategic investment, the Arts Commission translated each \$1 million allocation into:

- New jobs in the arts sector,
 - Increased access to quality arts education for Arizona students, and
 - Innovative initiatives reaching deep into Arizona cities and towns, leveraging local arts assets toward economic development and community improvement.
- a. These \$1 million allocations bolstered an arts sector that, while resilient, suffered significant setbacks during the recession.
 - b. These allocations also funded new entrepreneurial initiatives such as the Community Catalyst and Arizona Art Tank grant programs. These programs provide arts experiences to tens of thousands of Arizonans through activities which foster community and economic vitality.
 - c. While these \$1 million allocations represent less than half of what the Arts Commission received from the General Fund prior to the recession, rigorous econometric studies show that for every dollar invested in Arizona's nonprofit arts organizations, an average of \$1.50 is returned to the economy.
2. Based on the impact made by the \$1 million allocation in each of the last two years, the Arizona Commission on the Arts requested \$2 million for the FY16 budget to double the investment and return in local economic activity, jobs and tax revenues.
 3. Investments in the arts industry provide direct, positive returns. **We respectfully ask that as you deliberate about the FY16 budget, you consider the remarkable potential of a \$2 million investment in the Arts Commission for generating increased economic activity through local arts partnerships and programming.**
 4. **Additionally, if the \$1 million allocation is not repeated in the FY16 budget, it will result in an average 50% reduction in grants to local arts organizations and in the elimination of innovative programs** like Arizona Art Tank and Community Catalyst.
 5. As the state continues to recover from an economic downturn, the arts sector continues to be an industry that provides significant benefits to our state by advancing innovation, promoting tourism, and contributing to the comprehensive education of Arizona youth.