

2014-16 Strategic Plan
Virginia Commission for the Arts [148]

Mission

To support and stimulate excellence in all of the arts, in their full cultural and ethnic diversity, in order to enhance the quality of life, to stimulate economic development, to support educational advancement, and to make the arts accessible to all Virginians.

Vision

The arts enrich the lives of those who participate in the arts either as practitioners or as audience. The arts enliven communities, adding to the quality of life in the Commonwealth of Virginia and contributing to a strong social fabric. The arts also contribute economic value to the Commonwealth of Virginia, both through the direct spending of the industry and by attracting other businesses, and are a vital part of education for young people. The Commission has been entrusted with public funds and has an obligation to make the most effective use of those scarce resources. All Virginians benefit from having a strong arts community. The benefits to Virginia artists and to the arts audience in the Commonwealth are clear. Even those individuals who do not choose to participate in the arts as professional or vocational practitioners or as part of the arts audience, however, benefit from the economic, educational, and social impact of the arts.

Values

Finance

Financial Overview

The Commission for the Arts funding for grants comes from general funds (93.8 percent) and federal funds (6.2 percent).

Biennial Budget

	2015 General Fund	2015 Nongeneral Fund	2016 General Fund	2016 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	3,907,459	863,705	3,910,587	863,801
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	273,741	0

(Changes to Initial Appropriation will be 0 when the plan is created. They will change when the plan is updated mid-biennium.)

Customers

Anticipated Changes to Customer Base

Current Customer List

Predefined Group	User Defined Group	Number Served Annually	Potential Number of Annual Customers	Projected Customer Trend
Consumer	Artists	0	0	Stable
Consumer	Not-For-Profit Arts Organizations	0	0	Stable
Student	K-12 Schools	0	0	Stable

Partners

Name	Description
Virginia Tourism Corporation	The Virginia Commission for the Arts and the Virginia Tourism Corporation have created a special grant program to help Virginia arts organizations, working in partnership with the local tourism industry, with direct expenses for tourism promotion efforts.
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Agency Goals

- High quality arts accessible to all Virginians, regardless of location in state, race, income, or disability

Summary and Alignment

Objective 1: Provide incentives to non-profit art organizations to expand the number of art events for the public throughout Virginia.
Objective 2: Provide financial incentives to nonprofit organizations for new initiatives in the arts. Objective 3: Through the Touring Program support at least 250 performances in every Virginia city and in at least 90 counties each year of the biennium.

Objectives

• A vibrant cultural infrastructure for the Commonwealth with a strong financial base

Summary and Alignment

Objective 1: Assist organizations of artistic merit by providing funds to maintain stability and encourage advancement. Objective 2: Provide incentives to at least 125 localities in each year of the biennium to fund the arts with local tax revenues Objective 3: Provide training to non-profit arts organizations in a wide variety of arts management skills Objective 4: Encourage arts organizations to work with local tourism promotion offices in promoting local cultural tourism

Objectives

• Opportunities for Virginia artists of exceptional talent to develop their careers in the Commonwealth.

Summary and Alignment

Objective 1: Support the work of outstanding Virginia artists.

Objectives

Major Products and Services

The Commission receives approximately 1,300 grants applications and distributes approximately 860 grants a year to artists, arts and other not-for-profit organizations, educational institutions, educators and local governments, and provides technical assistance in arts management through nine grant programs.

The Virginia Commission for the Arts holds an annual statewide Art Works conference held in Richmond, Virginia every January. This conference attracts 350 - 400 participants a year. The conference is for artists, board and staff leaders of Virginia arts organizations, arts educators, and arts advocates.

The Commission provides state-wide grant workshops.

The Commission provides on-line resources such as accessibility guidance, grant writing, funding opportunities, employment opportunities, non-profit management and information on forming a non-profit arts organization.

Performance Highlights

Virginia's arts industry creates jobs. In 2012-2013 Virginia Commission for the Arts grantees employed 15,841 employees in full-time, part-time and contract positions in FY13, an increase of more than 6,000 jobs since 2011-2012.

Virginia Commission for the Arts arts organizations promotes tourism in the Commonwealth. In 2012-2013, 7.1 million people attended arts events made possible through Commission funding. The Commission works closely with the Virginia Tourism Corporation to facilitate strategic partnerships between arts organizations and the local tourism industry for marketing initiatives.

The arts support other businesses and generate revenues for the Commonwealth. Arts organizations purchase goods and services from other businesses. Commission statistics show that patrons of the arts spent about \$173 million on restaurants, hotels and parking while attending events funded in part by the Commission.

The arts play a key role in community-building. Arts organizations are anchors for development and revitalization in cities and small towns. Theaters and other arts venues are often the catalyst for downtown revivals. The Virginia Commission for the Arts Touring Assistance Program provides opportunities for Virginians in rural and underserved areas to experience performing arts events. The Commonwealth's contribution of \$3.36 million for arts grants leveraged another \$28 million in funding from individuals, corporations, private foundations and other entities in 2012-2013.

The arts are essential to the intellectual and creative growth of Virginia's children. Research shows that arts education boosts student achievement, helping to advance the critical-thinking skills students need to be productive participants in the global economy. Virginia Commission for the Arts grantees served more than 2.5 million youth in 2012-2013.

Staffing

Authorized Maximum Employment Level (MEL)	0
Salaried Employees	4
Wage Employees	2

Key Risk Factors

Staffing: The Commission currently has a staff of four full time and two part time employees. If the Commission had an increased staff the agency would be able to complete new initiatives, such as training for arts organizations on capacity building and management; working with PK-12 school on STEM (STEAM) initiatives; building larger and more diverse audiences and developing partnerships with health care and veterans institutions.

Revenue: The last several economic downturns have had an immediate effect on the work of nonprofit arts organizations, PK-12 schools and local governments. The recovery from an economic downturn is longer for nonprofit organizations than for for-profit businesses.

IT: The Commission processes approximately 1,300 grants a year. Each applicant submits up to twelve copies of an application. The information from the application is manually entered into the agency's database. This process is outdated and inefficient. The Commission has been researching electronic grant systems (e-Grant). Virginia is one of four state arts agencies that still manually processes grant applications.

Management Discussion

General Information About Ongoing Status of Agency

The Virginia Commission for the Arts plays an integral role in the development of the state's arts resources and in keeping the arts accessible, visible and valued. The Commission is clear and consistent regarding its values and aligning actions with those values. While our values have not changed over time, the needs, challenges and complexity of the Commonwealth's arts resources, population and conditions have changed considerably.

The Commission primarily concentrates its efforts on supporting and expanding the Commonwealth's cultural resources and providing for and increasing opportunities for participation and connection to the arts. While these efforts continue, our focus needs to broaden to consider a fuller and more complex integration of the arts into the whole fabric of a **creative culture** for Virginia.

The Commission approved a new two year Strategic Plan which gives the Commission staff and board the guidelines to help / ensure the arts flourish in Virginia as we move into our next phase of service.

The Commission used the strategic planning process as an opportunity to reflect upon our past, evaluate the present, and envision the future. This plan will serve as a living document to assist the Commission in addressing the issues, needs and concerns of the arts in the Commonwealth.

As we move forward, a new emphasis will be placed on creating more opportunities for collaboration, within our agency, other state agencies, heritage and historical groups and with arts organizations across the state. We will pay close attention to the feedback we receive about our programs and services in order to evaluate our work and its impact on the Commonwealth. This will help us to make decisions about how to help the arts in areas of education, tourism, economic workforce development, advocacy and the health and stability of the arts in the state.

Information Technology

The Virginia Commission for the Arts uses information technology to its fullest capabilities. The Commission has an active presence on Facebook with over 5,000 followers. The Commission also has a strong presence on Twitter.

The Commission encourages arts organizations to market their programs on the Internet through its own web sites and the state tourism web site, as well as linking these web sites to the Commission's website. The agency tracks the number of Virginia arts organizations with a current presence on the Internet.

Arts Education: The Commission has a variety of programs that enrich the work of teachers in the public schools: artist residencies, the educational programs of nonprofit arts organizations around the state, and touring performers that go into schools. The agency communicates primarily with its arts education clients through email and the website. These strategies can be funded from the agency base budget. The agency measures success by the number of school divisions with expanded arts education programs.

Database: The agency developed and installed a new Access database system in January of 2011.

Estimate of Technology Funding Needs

Workforce Development

The Virginia Commission for the Arts is increasing staff education on procurement, state accounting procedures, ADA compliance, web development, grant writing, etc. This is being done through classes provided by the Department of General Services, Department of Accounts, local colleges, workshops, and conferences.

The Commission's Executive Director is working with the Department of Human Resources to redistribute staff responsibilities and rewrite staff job descriptions.

Physical Plant

The Virginia Commission for the Arts is located at 1001 East Broad Street (Suites 330 & 340), Richmond, Virginia. The building is managed and maintained by the Department of General Services. The Commission pays General Services a yearly rental fee.

Supporting Documents

Title

File Type

Financial Assistance to Cultural Organizations [14302]

Description of this Program / Service Area

The Commission distributes grant awards to artists, arts and other not-for-profit organizations, educational institutions, local governments, and provides technical assistance in arts management.

Mission Alignment

Supporting and stimulating excellence in the arts in Virginia is the responsibility of the Commission. Artistic quality is the first consideration in the decision to fund any arts organization or arts activity. The Commission supports artistic excellence where it already exists, encourages growth in artistic quality, and works to make this artistic excellence available to all Virginians.

The Commission works to ensure that quality arts are accessible to all Virginians regardless of race, age, gender, income, disability, geographic isolation, or social barrier. The Commission supports existing arts organizations in all parts of the Commonwealth and encourages new organizations that serve people with limited access to the arts.

In addition, the Commission makes a substantial investment in performing arts touring each year as a way of increasing the availability of high quality arts throughout the state.

The Commission believes that it is through the arts that we celebrate the diverse cultures of this country. Funding is available for arts organizations, artists, and arts activities involved in the creation and presentation of projects that preserve and celebrate the many cultures of contemporary life in The Commonwealth.

Central to support for the arts is aid to individual artists of all disciplines. The Commission believes that assisting the artist today is an investment in the cultural heritage of the Commonwealth. The Commission provides fellowships for individual artists to help create new work as well as advance the careers of artists and the art forms in which they work.

If the arts are to thrive, there must be a receptive environment. The Commission hopes to develop a broad interest in and demand for new art in The Commonwealth by assisting in the purchase, commissioning, presentation, and distribution of work by Virginia artists of all disciplines. The Commission's goal is a climate in which artists of exceptional talent may work full time at their art, assured of critical and financial rewards. Arts organizations receiving funding from the Commission are encouraged to pay their artists. Additionally, the Commission supports artist retreats, access centers for equipment and studio/rehearsal space, and organizations that provide information and advisory services for individual artists.

The Commission provides on-going support for established arts organizations and helps in the development of new arts organizations which fill a community need. In deciding which organizations to support, the Commission looks for high standards of artistic quality and management and the amount of local commitment to an organization in terms of attendance and financial support.

The Commission funds both professional and non-professional organizations that strive for artistic excellence. The Commission defines a "professional" organization as one composed of, hiring, or serving artists who earn or endeavor to earn their living through the practice of their art.

The Commission provides technical assistance to arts organizations, including paying for staff and board members to attend workshops and seminars, funding short term consultations on management problems, and conducting management workshops. The Commission views its financial assistance role to arts groups as that of a catalyst, helping to strengthen private and local support of the arts. The Commission believes in a diversified funding base for arts organizations.

It is the position of the Virginia Commission for the Arts that study of the arts should be a part of the education of every young person, whether that student grows up to be a performer, a scientist, or a basketball player. Creative activity is a source of joy and wonder. The arts use complex symbols to communicate. Serious study of the arts requires analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. These thinking skills lead to improved academic performance in all subjects.

The workforce of this century will need to be creative to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. Children are naturally creative, and study of the arts helps to teach ways to channel this creativity.

Self-discipline and the ability to work as part of a team will be critical job skills. Dancing, acting, or playing a musical instrument instills discipline. Performing in a school play or playing in a marching band requires teamwork.

We are in a global economy and need to understand the cultures of our trading partners. Learning about the arts of other countries builds an understanding of the people. Teachers can use the arts to teach history, reading, and social studies. Mathematics, science and technology offer natural connections with the arts as well.

A complete curriculum in the arts includes both training in performance and in the creation of art work and the study of the history and theory of art, music, dance, drama, and creative writing. Study of the arts should be undertaken according to rigorous standards. Serious study of the arts is a model for learning in other disciplines.

The Commission supports artist residencies in the schools, innovative projects that integrate the arts with non-arts curricula, and the educational programs of nonprofit arts organizations. None of these educational resources, however, take the place of sequential, curriculum-based arts

instruction delivered by certified arts teachers. These supplemental arts programs reinforce and expand upon the arts curricula. Although arts education is primarily the responsibility of state and local education agencies, the Commission does provide financial assistance to schools in designing and upgrading arts curricula. The Commission works in partnership with arts education associations, the Virginia Board of Education, the Virginia Department of Education, and arts organizations to promote arts education in all elementary and secondary schools in Virginia.

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Grant awards to artists, arts and other not-for-profit organizations, educational institutions, educators and local governments, and provides technical assistance in arts management. The Commission also holds an annual statewide Art Works conference held in Richmond, Virginia every January. This conference is for artists, board and staff leaders of Virginia arts organizations, arts educators, and arts advocates.

Anticipated Changes

No anticipated changes in products or service.

Factors Impacting

The level of the general fund appropriation for the agency is the largest factor impacting the level and scope of its products and services. The agency has also experienced significant challenges in managing its IT system since the centralization of the state IT services. The annual cost of the IT service rates have limited the agency’s ability to make technological advances.

Financial Overview

The Commission for the Arts funding for grants come from general funds (93.80 percent) and federal funds (6.2 percent)

Biennial Budget

	2015 General Fund	2015 Nongeneral Fund	2016 General Fund	2016 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	0	0	0	0
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	0

Supporting Documents

Title **File Type**

Operational and Support Services [14507]

Description of this Program / Service Area

Carry out the mission of the agency in the most effective manner possible.

Mission Alignment

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The Commission works to ensure that quality arts are accessible to all Virginians regardless of race, age, gender, income, disability, geographic isolation, or social barrier. The Commission supports existing arts organizations in all parts of the Commonwealth and encourages new organizations that serve people with limited access to the arts.

In addition, the Commission makes a substantial investment in performing arts touring each year as a way of increasing the availability of high quality arts throughout the state.

The Commission believes that it is through the arts that we celebrate the diverse cultures of this country. Funding is available for arts organizations, artists, and arts activities involved in the creation and presentation of projects that preserve and celebrate the many cultures of contemporary life in The Commonwealth.

Central to support for the arts is aid to individual artists of all disciplines. The Commission believes that assisting the artist today is an investment in the cultural heritage of the Commonwealth. The Commission provides fellowships for individual artists to help create new work as well as advance the careers of artists and the art forms in which they work.

If the arts are to thrive, there must be a receptive environment. The Commission hopes to develop a broad interest in and demand for new art in the Commonwealth by assisting in the purchase, commissioning, presentation, and distribution of work by Virginia artists of all disciplines. The Commission's goal is a climate in which artists of exceptional talent may work full time at their art, assured of critical and financial rewards. Arts organizations receiving funding from the Commission are encouraged to pay their artists. Additionally, the Commission supports artist retreats, access centers for equipment and studio/rehearsal space, and organizations that provide information and advisory services for individual artists.

The Commission provides on-going support for established arts organizations and helps in the development of new arts organizations which fill a community need. In deciding which organizations to support, the Commission looks for high standards of artistic quality and management and the amount of local commitment to an organization in terms of attendance and financial support.

The Commission funds both professional and non-professional organizations that strive for artistic excellence. The Commission defines a "professional" organization as one composed of, hiring, or serving artists who earn or endeavor to earn their living through the practice of their art.

The Commission provides technical assistance to arts organizations, including paying for staff and board members to attend workshops and seminars, funding short term consultations on management problems, and conducting management workshops. The Commission views its financial assistance role to arts groups as that of a catalyst, helping to strengthen private and local support of the arts. The Commission believes in a diversified funding base for arts organizations.

It is the position of the Virginia Commission for the Arts that study of the arts should be a part of the education of every young person, whether that student grows up to be a performer, a scientist, or a basketball player. Creative activity is a source of joy and wonder. The arts use complex symbols to communicate. Serious study of the arts requires analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. These thinking skills lead to improved academic performance in all subjects.

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A complete curriculum in the arts includes both training in performance and in the creation of art work and the study of the history and theory of art, music, dance, drama, and creative writing. Study of the arts should be undertaken according to rigorous standards. Serious study of the arts is a model for learning in other disciplines.

The Commission supports artist residencies in the schools, and the educational programs of nonprofit arts organizations. None of these

educational resources, however, take the place of sequential, curriculum-based arts instruction delivered by certified arts teachers. These supplemental arts programs reinforce and expand upon the arts curricula. Although arts education is primarily the responsibility of state and local education agencies, the Commission does provide financial assistance to schools in designing and upgrading arts curricula. The Commission works in partnership with arts education associations, the Virginia Board of Education, the Virginia Department of Education, and arts organizations to promote arts education in all elementary and secondary schools in Virginia.

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Grant awards to artists, arts and other not-for-profit organizations, educational institutions, educators and local governments, and provides technical assistance in arts management. The Commission also holds an annual statewide ArtWorks conference held in Richmond, Virginia every January. This conference is for artists, board and staff leaders of Virginia arts organizations, arts educators, and arts advocates.

Anticipated Changes

No anticipated changes in products or service.

Factors Impacting

The economic climate has provided unprecedented challenges for arts institutions. The nonprofit arts organizations of the state have been traditionally undercapitalized and understaffed for the level of programming presented. There is little budget flexibility to deal with reductions in earned or contributed income. Virginia arts organizations, by and large, spent down their cash reserves, laid off staff, frozen salaries, and cut programs for the public. Many borrowed to keep their doors open, and every institution has been forced to devote more staff resources to fundraising. As staff sizes are reduced, individuals are working longer hours and handling more responsibilities. Staff and volunteer burn-out and turnover are high.

The majority of individual artists earn their living by piecing together several part time jobs. For example, a symphony orchestra musician probably also teaches at one of the state colleges and has private pupils in addition to rehearsing and performing with the orchestra. If the number of arts organizations declines and the remaining organizations cut their programming for financial reasons, there are fewer opportunities for individual artists to find employment in their chosen field, forcing younger artists to move out-of-state to pursue their careers.

With the increased emphasis on the statewide testing on the Standards of Learning, there is less flexibility in the school schedule. This change has led to a reduction in the number of artist residencies in the public schools. Teachers have less time to plan enrichment activities for their students. The Commission for the Arts has redesigned its arts in education programs to accommodate these changes.

Financial Overview

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Biennial Budget

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Supporting Documents

Title **File Type**