

Conference Feedback

ZOELLNER ARTS CENTER AT LEHIGH UNIVERSITY
BETHLEHEM, PA | NOVEMBER 1, 2023

This event was intended to benefit all of Pennsylvania's arts and humanities organizations whose resources were severely impacted by the pandemic.



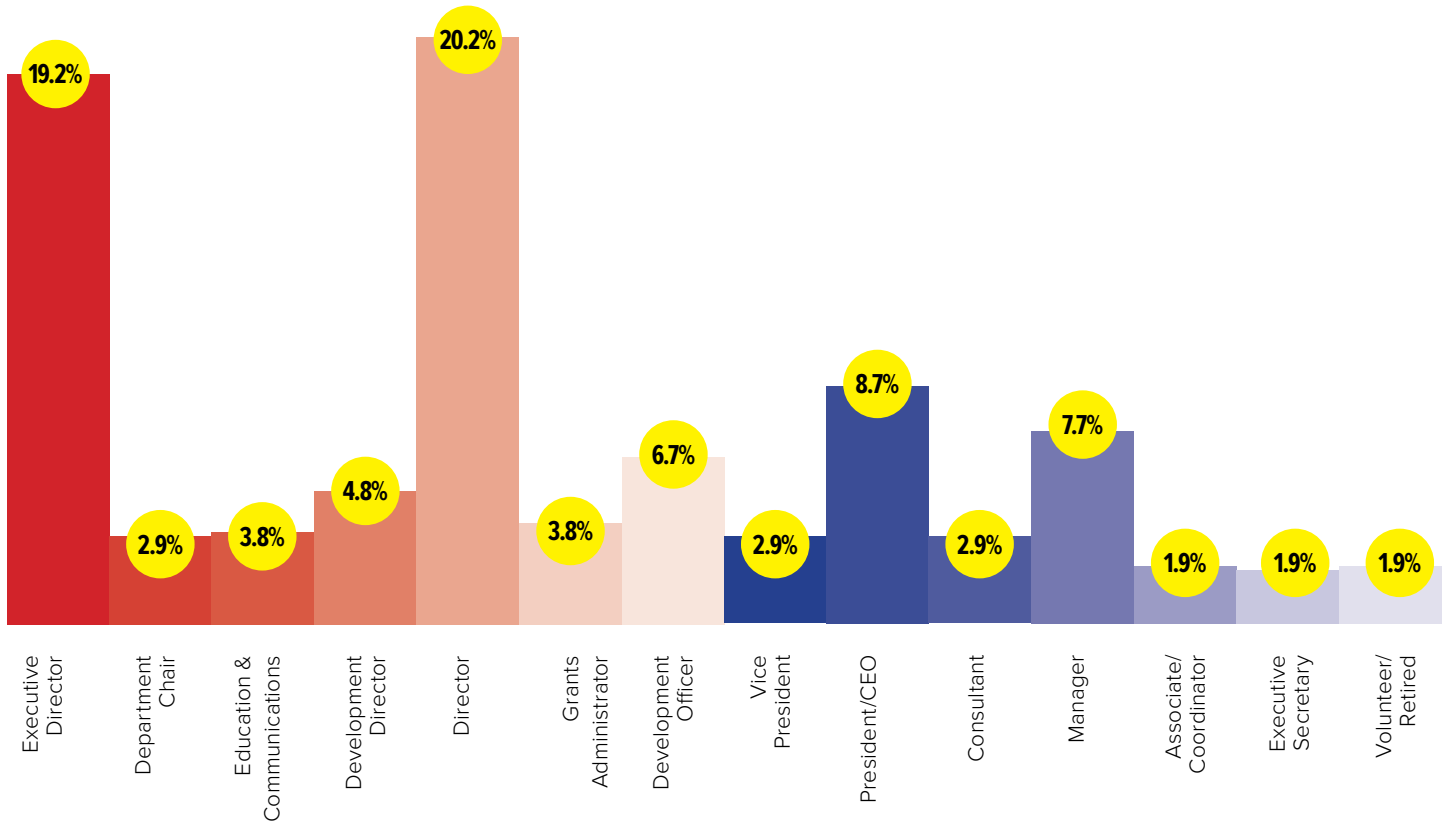
Pennsylvania Arts & Humanities:

A Statewide Convening



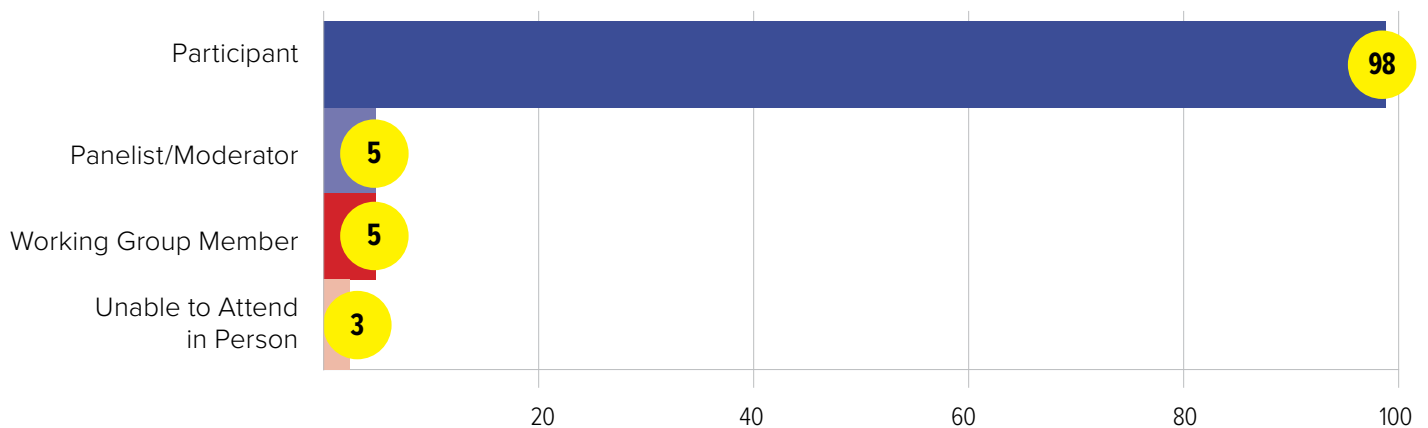
PRESENTED BY U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY
AND LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

What is your role within your organization?



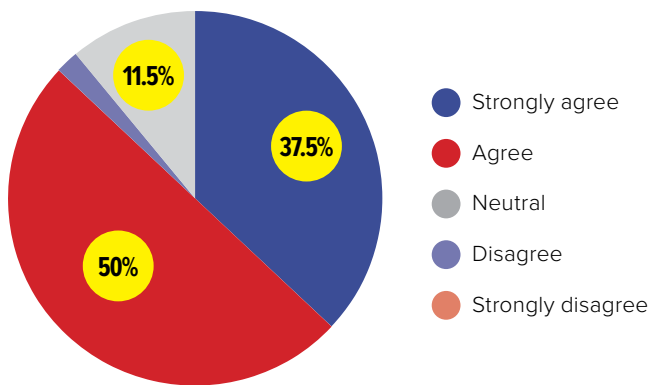
What was your role at the convening? Select all that apply.

104 Responses



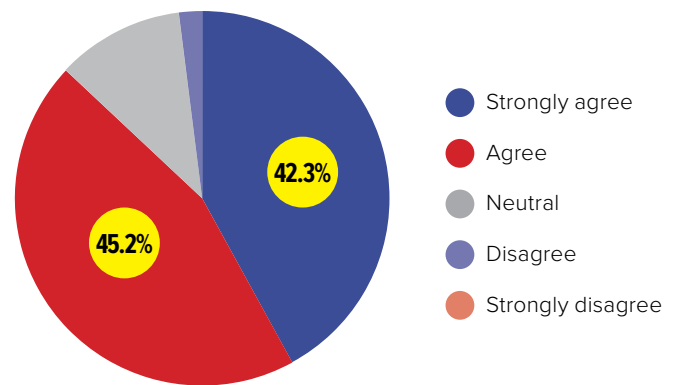
This convening was helpful for my organization.

104 Responses



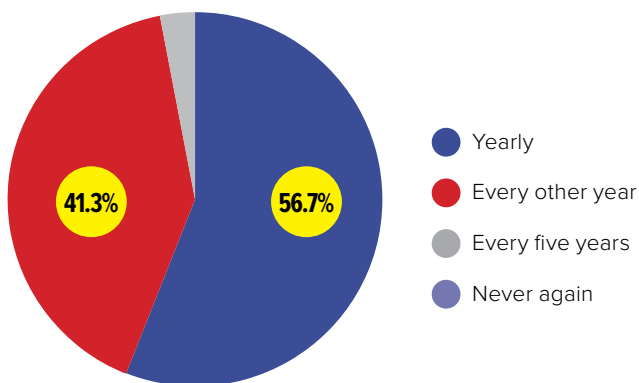
This convening helpful was to me personally/professionally.

104 Responses



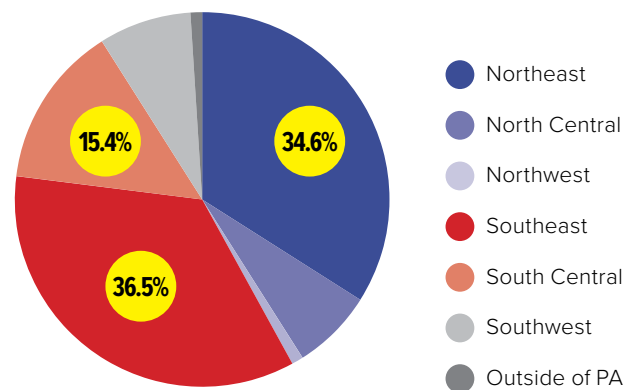
I think that we should have a convening like this:

104 Responses



What is your geographic location?

104 Responses



Q: What was the most valuable piece of information you learned or a highlight from the convening?

Grants:

- What funding is currently available and the guidelines for each grant
- The explanation of various major grants, EITC, and other types of funding available was immensely helpful for my position.

Connecting:

- Connecting with other arts orgs from across the state, hearing COVID data points
- Meeting people I've only ever emailed, the actual physical presence of people, was the most valuable essence of the convening IMO
- It was empowering to have like-minded organizations working together to address topics that are relevant across the entire state.
- Just being in a space with peers to network is incredibly valuable. There are so many variations on Arts and Humanities and it was fascinating to see who was represented.

Data:

- The post-COVID data about how other organizations are recovering
- The economic impact of our work even as we are all trying to bounce back from the pandemic.
- Data-driven session on results from studies - it's not just us!!
- Getting the national update, hearing from diverse arts organization who are thriving despite the tough environment

Session Specific:

- I loved both panels I attended - Power sharing and DEI in hiring practices. I was blown away by Dan Lawd from the Warhol Museum. He had such powerful insights to share that I will carry with me. We've got to break away from the scarcity mindset to accomplish big things.
- Learning about the placemaking work outside of Philadelphia and connecting with grant makers at PCA about a personal idea for a research project.
- Loved the session with people talking about using the humanities to address housing and gentrification-great tactical work-learned how to approach this, also learned info. on how to build creative entrepreneurship opportunities. Also loved networking and meeting new people for potential partnerships.
- work force conversation; budget session was also useful; I appreciated the intros to the various Federal agencies but we needed more time to understand and ask questions of them about their structure/ evolution/future.
- I liked Art as a Social Prescription best. An interactive dialogue with the panel from audience questions.
- Is there any information that could have been communicated better?
- The sessions details. I had to register three times for the session and still ended up choosing on the spot. I am not sure if this is a systems error or lack of understanding. Also, the parking directions were unclear and the shuttles were inaccessible.
- description about what to expect from the panels would be welcome
- I wish there was time left for curated questions. I would have liked to ask the data-driven panel on how they see the data changing with the challenges now in the economy - where audience were already

down 20% after COVID - what are we to expect with inflation and household economic concerns? More enlightenment on how those past numbers will be further impacted by today's issues.

- The content of the breakout sessions. The one that I went to had a vague title and it didn't end up being that relevant to me.
- I would have liked to see a whole section on program promotion on the grassroots level in small and rural cities. Let's talk about how easy it is to become "invisible" as a community venue and how much the loss of local papers has hurt local arts organizations.
- maybe an overall vision for the Arts and Humanities sectors in the Commonwealth, anticipating challenges, cause for celebration
- More advance notice of the meeting
- While it was included in the email that went out just prior to the event, it was something that so many of us overlooked because there was so much information, and that is the parking instructions, but it all worked out fine in the end.
- A description of the content and speakers for each breakout session would have been helpful in choosing which to attend.
- a little more signage (and space) around lunch networking opportunity
- Some of the sessions pitched as sharing "trends" seemed to be more a casual conversation highlighting environmental factors but not resulting in any clear trend data.
- I think there could have been better communication around who would potentially benefit most from each session.
- I would have liked to have more information on paper so I could read more at home.
- The online registration process was not very clear; ultimately I was registered but there was no record of the sessions I had selected. having to stand at the busy registration table to mark my selections on clipboards was cumbersome.
- I only learned about this through a social media post from Drexel. A better outreach /communication effort would be good, if the capacity would allow for a larger event

Q: Are there any topics that you wish had been covered in the Breakout Sessions?

- There was a mini lunch session that allowed organizations to interact with PCA and Citizens for the Arts - it was a great conversation about what organizations need from PCA/CFA. This might make a good breakout session!
- I would have liked a more in-depth grants session rather than just an overview
- How to work with community partners
- History of arts/cultural funding and advocacy
- Having a balance of speakers that discuss their services, how they applied for grants and sustained them. Having individuals with disabilities be presenters to discuss how art and accessibility barriers impacted their life.
- Fundraising, casebuilding, more opportunities to network with fellow attendees
- It would be nice if there were more opportunities to connect with others - the space was not super conducive to that, but it would have been nice to have meet ups for theater folks, or geographical-

ly-based groups.

- The changing nature of the arts and the arts experience.
- Development
- Collaboration/Partnerships
- How EITC works
- An advocacy/lobbying breakout session for people to organize and mobilize.
- more specifics of grant opportunities, esp for history based orgs; this convening was heavy on arts; I wish IMLS, NEH, and NEA each had a breakout to get into more details
- For grant-writing. No one EVER covers the logistics of writing a budget / explaining how you will manage funds received in any grant writing session I have ever attended at one of these. It is always 101 basics. Would appreciate a more comprehensive session on grant writing. Not the more common sense stuff.
- Maybe a session for nonprofit start-ups and where to find funding for smaller budgeted orgs.
- More about technology, evolution of business practices and models, more about collaborations and partnerships and more focus on community arts.
- Additional funding that is related to capital projects that wasn't addressed: i.e. RACP, LSA, etc.
- Emerging fields, ways to support individual artists and creatives, policy issues like the rise of unionization in arts organizations and lackluster public funding available
- how to deal with employee issues, finding qualified people, changing work attitudes
- Collaborations of funding

Q: Who wasn't here that should have been?

- Senator Bob Casey. I was surprised he was only available via Zoom
- More museum people
- More individuals with disabilities.
- I didn't see representation from arts and humanities in my county. I don't know if they didn't know about it or chose not attend.
- Mid-Atlantic Arts maybe. More people from Central and Western PA. More state officials.
- Perhaps inviting members of the Arts & Caucus Sector and having more legislators present.
- DCED - EITC
- Staff from state, federal, and local legislative offices; members of the PA arts caucus
- I think that this could be marketed more as a professional development opportunity for institutions to offer their staff more broadly--especially if the scope of breakouts was wider.
- Business leaders who are not necessarily involved in the arts but our philanthropic or supporters might get use out of networking and getting feedback from arts individuals who don't necessarily have the opportunity to speak to those business individuals. It would be great for those people to see beyond the cover of an organization.
- Community Arts and For-profit Arts and Entertainment figure heads and organizations.
- Local and or corporate funders?

- smaller orgs from western PA
- businesses in the arts that do well partnering with arts or service arts (Rock Lititz) some performing artists
- more operators of performing arts centers
- statewide foundations and other funders
- I saw many representatives from arts organizations but not many from history centers/historic sites.
- It would have been nice to see more artistic leaders of performing arts organizations of all sizes from throughout the state.
- Pennsylvania Citizens for the Arts
- Someone from the performing arts space
- PLAN504
- There were a lot of organizations that could still be included, particularly those lead and operated by people of the global majority.

Q: What was your overall impression of the Convening?

- Very good event
- Excellent! Great to be with folks, energizing, and well organized
- I enjoyed meeting with other professionals from across the state. The conference was well done.
- It was wonderful to get together with other colleagues, but it missed that next step. It was a report. It left a feeling of being lacking.
- It was very rewarding for everyone who attended
- It was informative. Thanks for inviting me to the event.
- Great idea; could have had a space more conducive to conversation; the food was not bad!
- As a veteran of these events, there wasn't much for me.
- A lot of useful and enlightening information. In the future, perhaps have more sessions that include interaction rather than just panelist discussion.
- Wonderful start!
- I thoroughly enjoyed the day. From this event, i was able to gain new insights and extend our reach as an organization across the state.
- Well organized
- good idea to have meeting--get this group of people together, but not enough specifics to make really useful for me
- Very professionally done. It feels good when government extends itself to be helpful, particularly since grant award processes are challenging for many institutions.
- informative and right length of time
- Very well worthwhile. Very well organized and planned.
- The sessions were great and helpful. Other than parking, my only negative would be that there was no place to sit to eat lunch. We had to sit on steps and against the walls because there were no seats in the roundtable session.
- Overall is was a good introduction and start to a statewide convening. I wished there was more arts (visual and performing) integrated into the programming but I enjoyed meeting new people and catching up.
- It was a great networking opportunity and was well organized
- I was very impressed with the organizational aspects and communications surrounding the event. It was highly professional and so well done for a first time event. I found the topical information to be OK, but found myself wanting a deeper dive often. I've been in the

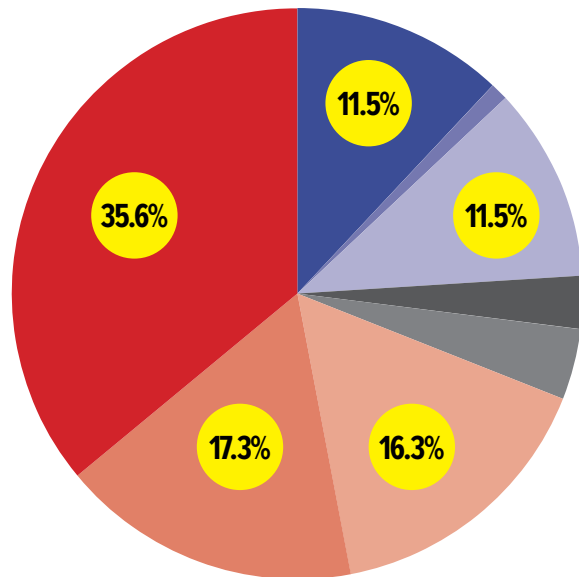
field for quite awhile and realize that a balance needs to be achieved, given the wide variety of participants. My overall impression is that this was an excellent event.

- It was great. Very helpful!
- Good with the exception of seating to eat.
- Excellent
- Well organized but I wish there had been more seating for lunch
- It was great to see the number of people who showed up and the distance many of them came to take part in the Convening. This is a very healthy outcome. But, there is a down side to this in the size of the panel sessions. My guess is if these sessions were smaller open discussions of well-defined topics, the interchange between participants would have been quite intense—and productive. Of all things, everyone is in search of best practices on the most practical issues. Discussion of these topics could be more effective in smaller meetings.
- Helpful and useful
- Welcoming, friendly, thoughtful, and a celebration!
- It was very good.
- positive
- Great to bring people together. I wish that there was more time to network - all of the sessions I attended ran over time and so I didn't have time to visit any of the tables in the lobby.
- Productive and well organized
- it was good but too much of a data dump, more ways to engage other participants
- Well organized
- Very positive
- I hope it grows to an annual event. There could have been more opportunities built in the sessions to exchange with / learn from other participants. There could have been tables where participants could sit down and eat without going to a working lunch. It had a very early start time.
- There is no obvious place to share this feedback, so I'm writing it here—it shouldn't have been on November 1. Those who had to travel couldn't stay overnight because of family obligations on Halloween.
- It was a really impactful and exciting day that inspired, educated, and encouraged me about the state of the arts in Pennsylvania, and I left feeling like this is something that needs to happen on a regular basis, once each year.
- Fantastic panelists! I left inspired and excited to continue working towards building an equitable and accessible arts community.
- Very good
- It was great and a much needed way to connect with key arts groups across the state. The schedule was a bit packed, I would have liked more networking time built in.
- It was a lovely networking opportunity.
- Very well organized and managed
- Great to meet and engage in relevant topics to our organization.
- I was glad to participate
- I think the layout of the facility was odd and made it difficult to navigate spaces. Also, the lack of seating for lunch made it difficult to eat lunch.
- My first time attending - I found it valuable to get a sense of where the state is on a general level in terms of funding and the over arts and humanities community. I was also happy to network with folks from all over Pennsylvania.
- Positive: Many fine arts people sharing ideas and seeking help. Very productive.
- It was very well done and helpful!
- Planned well and included quality presenters in plenary sessions. Appreciated the "thank yous" to the nonprofit arts and culture sector. A great day! Thank you.
- It was instructional
- Great, please have it more centrally located :)
- important event, well-attended, keynote was right people, wrong presentation
- I think it was a great first step in stepping up PA's game as an arts and culture powerhouse of a commonwealth. I think there was a lot more opportunity for more breakouts and smaller groups to lead more discussion, as well as a missed opportunity for those in the same region or same discipline to directly network together. I would love to see it continue and grow.
- It was good but needs work to have stronger impact and somewhat disorganized. Definitely a very white and able bodied audience-more outreach & work needs to be done on engaging underrepresented communities. Funding panel was lackluster & were all men. I realize they were heads of the organizations but perhaps having someone who received funding or a program officer-other opportunities to learn from funders.
- Excellent first step in establishing a rotational convening geographically and content
- very worth my time. very glad it ended at 3pm and that you didnt try to pack in more for this time.
- some of the same info as usual.
- very good and informative, since many of the organizations do not have the necessary information
- "It was great! I learned a lot, it was truly a successful and informative day. I think the Keynotes seemed long and I almost wish there were 3 breakout sessions with a shortened keynote speaker lineup. It was hard to choose between the topics.
- I liked the lunch topics and I had a really rich conversation but I wish I had known more about that- I sat at a table and only realized after that we were supposed to seek out an interest."
- Room to learn and grow with it, but overall, very good to be with colleagues (in person, away from my computer screen) talking together about our work.
- Useful and informative; well-organized
- Just the right amount of time, accessible for travel from Philadelphia, great mix of public and private lens, and interesting presenters. Great auditorium for large presentations, but had a difficult time with the hallway breakout sessions.
- Good gathering. Loved that it was free and had a lunch
- Great idea
- Wonderful event; really well-done: a great reminder of how valuable the arts are for every facet of life
- useful but probably not worth the drive and full day off work
- nice
- Good for networking.
- Was wonderful to have so many organizations represented and to have it be in person after the COVID era. So many arts groups have struggled to keep their footing and it was reassuring to have strong interest in the event.

Great effort, valuable conversation. Thank you Mark!

Which session did you just attend?

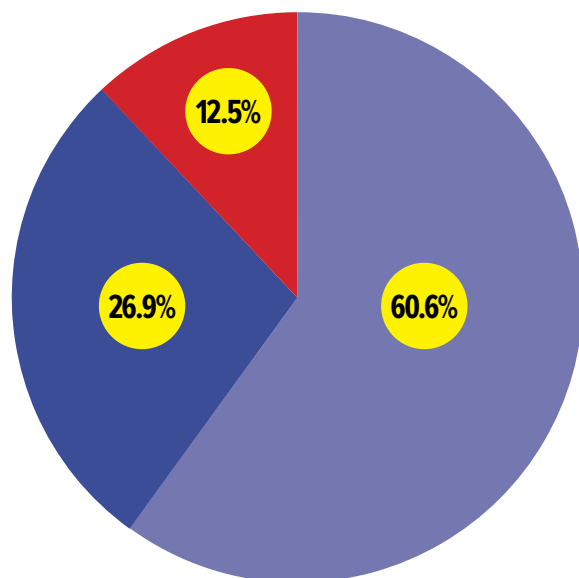
104 Responses



- The State of Arts, Culture, & Humanities: Data-Driven Insights Post Covid
- Power Sharing and Placemaking: Exploring Public-Private Partnerships to Address Complex Social Challenges
- Advancing Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, Access, and Belonging (DIEAB): Ensuring accessible Arts & Culture Opportunities for All
- Arts, Humanities, Tourism, and Recreation: Keeping PA Competitive
- Advancing Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, Access, and Belonging (DIEAB): Innovative Workforce Development Partnerships and Programs
- Art as a Social Prescription
- Fundamentals of Successful Grant Seeking
- How To Write A Winning Grant
- State Resources & Grant Opportunities for the Creative Sector

This session was very informative.

104 Responses



- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Advancing DIEAB: Ensuring Accessible Arts & Culture Opportunities for All:

- It was a little hard to hear from the back of the room but worth straining to understand!
- Well done. Good perspectives.
- Best information session ever
- I think including best practices would be helpful.

Advancing DIEAB: Innovative Workforce Development Partnerships and Programs:

- It was informative in some aspects but too narrow in others and didn't always feel relevant. Wish it was broader and more engaging.
- Grateful for the cross PA perspective! I think it was a perfect time frame and a wonderful community building experience overall

Arts, Humanities, Tourism, and Recreation: Keeping PA Competitive

- How do we make PA Cooperative as opposed to competitive.

Fundamentals of Successful Grant Seeking

- Excellent Info & Presentation
- Thank you so much. I'm a trainer myself and you did a fantastic job. I don't have any experience in grant writing and you made this session informative and enjoyable
- Would love an opportunity beyond "fundamentals", a level 2
- Kirsten was very professional, helpful, & enthusiastic. I would recommend this session to others
- Great presentation
- Lots of helpful info - thanks!
- Very good! Informative
- Such good practical, useful info! Wish the session was longer!
- It was great, thank you!
- Very good. Would appreciate a deeper dive into funds/budget related aspect of the grant writing process. Thank you!!

How To Write A Winning Grant

- Kate was wonderful!
- Presenter was great
- Would have like copy of slides
- Would have loved a longer session. Telling unique stories is important!!
- Great presentation. Very informative. Wish it was longer. Not sure about Jamboard.
- I appreciated the crowd sharing for comments and feedback.
- Love that we got to give examples and was given feedback.
- Kate was very engaging and informative.
- Thank you so much. Great
- loved that it was interactive!
- Very well prepared presentation
- good session, although I felt it was somewhat repetitive of the grant seeking workshop - still beneficial to attend
- loved the individual feedback
- More of this!

State Resources & Grant Opportunities for the Creative Sector

- It was very useful to walk away with tangible materials & directions for funding resources
- Very helpful! thank you!
- Very useful information and a great conference!
- The speakers were great and informative
- Very well done
- Very informative!
- Slides would have been helpful
- Slides to accompany the talking points would be helpful!
- Appreciate that the agency staff make themselves so available
- great panel!
- Appreciated the insights and candor
- Slides would have been very helpful. Better organizational diversity of panelists
- Would have helped to know that none of the info was useful for funding particular projects or individual artist projects
- Handouts BEFORE the session, not after
- good overview

The State of Arts, Culture, & Humanities: Data-driven Insights Post Covid

- It'd be great to have the opportunity to ask questions that arise from the conversation.
- I wish the state of the arts can also be discussed beyond economic impact
- It wasn't sure if it was multiple presentations or a panel. Disconnect in flow, but great info
- Enjoyed the moderator's guide through the topic and the panelists provided so many resources and information that our office intends to use.
- It was really interesting and informative
- This was engaging and informative!
- Great panel and moderator; but should be mindful of end time. Data was specific, but seemed like the data is all over the place, depending on what you do. Like all data, it was questionable what we're supposed to do with it.
- The word cloud really clearly was about how HARD it is out here right now, but all the closing remarks were about optimism. This is a PERFECT representation of the fundamental disconnect between funder organizations. We don't need - and certainly don't WANT - platitudes. We want actionable things we can do to stay ALIVE