

From the Executive Director, Philip Horn

I am pleased to present the PCA's new strategic plan for 2012–2017. As you may recall we held a number of town meetings to inform our work. We also commissioned a review of applications from 2009 and 2011. It is no surprise that your input and the review of the applications revealed significant challenges to the field. We saw that the non-profit arts sector is struggling to adapt to the economic downturn. We are a dedicated and resilient industry that continues to succeed and innovate in producing opportunities for participation in the arts for Pennsylvanians. We want to know about the strategies and innovations that are being implemented across the Commonwealth and share them with others. We saw some examples of these at our town meetings where the arts community has begun to work together to find new ways to collectively support greater participation in the arts. In response to your concerns, PCA is asking:

- How can we better use our capacity to gather and disseminate information of value to the field?
- How can we streamline and improve our grant processes to better serve you and lower your transaction costs?
- How can we sustain a dynamic and useful dialogue to connect people from communities across Pennsylvania?

Because the PCA is committed to helping make the arts available to all Pennsylvanians, whatever may be the barriers to participation, we have developed a plan that delivers support for access to the arts throughout the Commonwealth; continues to leverage our successful regional partnerships; supports the reorganization of PCA staff to maximize the efficiency of our internal operations; and develops our information services and website to be an interactive source of information sharing, and community building.

I welcome your thoughts and suggestions. Please send an email to RA-arts@pa.gov, interact with our website from time to time or just give us a call at 717-787-1530.

We love hearing from you.

FELLOW PENNSYLVANIANS

As Chair of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, I am pleased to introduce the 2012-2017 Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Strategic Plan, a document

recognizing the benefits of participation in the arts for citizens of the Commonwealth, addressing the significant challenges of the current fiscal environment, and presenting creative solutions for supporting vibrant arts organizations which in turn make for vibrant cities and communities.

The PCA encourages artistic vitality by nurturing excellence, encouraging

participation, and fostering appreciation for the arts throughout the Commonwealth. We recognize the significant role of arts and culture in educating our young people, revitalizing communities, promoting lifelong learning, improving quality of life, leveraging private resources, and attracting visitors to our state's world-class museums and cultural attractions.

I want to thank all the people across the Commonwealth who participated in the planning process for our state arts agency and notably, our PCA Council and staff, who envisioned, analyzed, organized and developed this new strategic plan, approved by the Council in 2012.

Sincerely,

Susan Corbett

Chair,
Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

First Lady of Pennsylvania



THE VISION 2012–2017

The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA) believes that arts and culture play a vital role in the many diverse communities of the Commonwealth.

Pennsylvania arts organizations, arts programs and projects, and artists provide our fellow citizens with opportunities to engage in and benefit from the arts as creators/ artists, audiences and/or participants. Statewide arts in education programs provide schools and communities access to the arts for people of all ages, interests and abilities.

The PCA will continue to—directly and through regional and statewide partnerships—provide support and information to numerous organizations, arts programs and projects, and artists to enhance the delivery of cultural services to the people of Pennsylvania.

MISSION

The Mission of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA) is to foster the excellence, diversity, and vitality of the arts in Pennsylvania and to broaden the availability and appreciation of those arts throughout the Commonwealth.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA) is a state agency established in 1966 by the State Legislature as part of the Office of the Governor and charged with “the encouragement and development of the various arts” in the Commonwealth. The PCA accomplishes its mission through a combination of grants to non-profit arts organizations, arts programs and projects and artists; partnerships and initiatives; technical assistance to partners and the field; and, by serving as a resource for arts related information for federal, state, and local governments, other funding entities, the arts field, and interested organizations and individuals. The PCA is governed by a Council of 19 members - fifteen private citizens and four members of the General Assembly. The citizen members of the Council are appointed by the Governor, with advice and consent of the Senate, and serve without compensation. The Council sets the mission and goals for the agency, evaluates the progress toward these goals, formulates policy, and makes final decisions on the use of funds.

The agency has a professional staff of 12.

METHODOLOGY

Work on the 2012-2017 Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Strategic Plan began in 2011. At the Council’s request, the PCA staff and planning consultants began to accumulate and review information from many sources, including:

- Information from a two-day planning retreat with PCA Council members and a two-day retreat with the PCA staff.
- Documentation of special meetings with Arts in Education Partners (AIE), Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts (PPA), VSA/PA, and Folk Arts Infrastructure were included.
- An assessment of the economic, social, political, and technological changes that may have an impact on the arts in Pennsylvania and the PCA.
- Analysis of grant applications from the years 2009 and 2011.
- Documentation from thirteen town meetings in sites across the Commonwealth.
- Once all the collected information had been analyzed, PCA staff members met to identify specific objectives and tasks for the current work programs and the proposed new activities.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2012–2017

The PCA has been recognized as a leader in the field for its major innovations in its grants making process, its use of technology, its decentralized partnerships, its Preserving Diverse Cultures Division and its fostering of accessibility to the arts for individuals with disabilities. The agency's services and funds are as relevant today as they have been for the past decades. What has changed since the last strategic plan is a significant decline in the economic health of the nation. Analysis of the information collected during this planning process is that the PCA must:

- 1 Adapt its programs and services to accommodate the changing requirements of the field and its current circumstance;
- 2 Learn to be more adept at what it provides to the field, and
- 3 Adopt new practices and policies that will enable the PCA and the arts in Pennsylvania to move forward.

ADAPT. Adaptation will occur on many different levels. The effectiveness of ongoing programs and services will be assessed in the context of today's environment. To enhance the delivery of cultural services to the people of Pennsylvania, policy makers and community leaders across the state will be approached to better understand their priorities and how the arts fit into those priorities.

ADEPT. Staff will be focusing on identifying best practices in the field. From the dialogue between Council and Staff, the agency will become increasingly adept at providing useful information to enhance the capacity of Pennsylvania's arts and cultural organizations.

ADOPT. Adopting new policies and practices shaped by information obtained through research and testing will become central to the efforts of the agency. The PCA has a history of subjecting its practices to empirical scrutiny, perhaps best reflected in the longitudinal analysis of the validity and reliability of the panel process. New research and testing of the Arts in Education, Teacher and Artist Partnerships (TAP) and Long Term Residences (LTR's) will continue the tradition of rigorously assessing programs and adopting innovations.

CURRENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The PCA provides support to make available the benefits of the arts to the citizens and communities of Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts (PPA) provides easy access to state arts funding. PCA funds are available at the local level through a quick and simple application process. The PCA formed the Arts in Education Partnership to build its arts in education efforts through a network of partners comprised of local and regional organizations that recruit, select, train, place and evaluate artists for residencies in educational settings. Since the inception of the partnership, the AIE partners have taken on national leadership roles; received prestigious honors, including the first national Arts Education Award presented by Americans for the Arts; and leveraged significant funding, including highly competitive U.S. Department of Education Model Development & Dissemination Grants.

NEW PRIORITIES INCLUDE

- Conducting a Listening Tour to gather information from community leaders.
- Researching and testing new and best practices in the field, starting with querying PCA panelists about their review of applications for innovation and achievement.
- Fostering institutional capacity to assist organizations to adapt to changing circumstances.
- Exploring ways to reduce operating expenses for arts organizations from a state-wide perspective
- Using the Teacher and Artist Partnership (TAP) as a front runner in testing marketing and advocacy activities.

The draft plan was reviewed and discussed by Council members over a series of regularly scheduled public meetings. This document reflects the goals and objectives approved by the Council in 2012 which will be given priority within the current and new activities of the PCA.

Goal One:**ADAPT****Re-aligning the infrastructure. Do what we do better.****Objective I.1**

Assess and re-align the grants process to make it simpler, more accessible and commensurate with the potential grant amount. Reduce applicant effort.

Objective I.2

Re-align internal structure of the agency to adapt to present resources.

Objective I.3

Implement new eGrant and database system throughout the agency and partnerships for responsive funding and the AIE Division.

Objective I.4

Update the PCA website to be more interactive, easier to use and capable of supporting an online learning community.

Objective 1.5

Review and revise as needed the Professional Development and Consulting Program.

Objective I.6

Support the PCA partnership infrastructure with improved communication and information. Establish a schedule to evaluate PPA and AIE partnership programs and services for streamlining, expansion, or refinement.

Objective I.7

Provide grantees a higher level of technical assistance with regard to grantsmanship.

Objective I.8

Restructure Council meetings to achieve a deeper level of engagement among the members and to ensure meetings are more effective.

Objective 1.9

Continue annual review of PCA funding allocation strategy and mechanism.

Goal Two:**ADEPT****Making our current efforts more effective and efficient to provide and enhance access to the arts for all Pennsylvanians.****Objective II.1**

Maintain or expand the Preserving Diverse Cultures (PDC) division to serve organizations whose mission is reflective of the African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American (ALNAH) perspectives.

Objective II.2

Maintain and expand participation by diverse, rural and/or underserved communities in PCA-supported programs

Objective II.3

Support individual artists in Pennsylvania. Such support, in various forms, is a vital aspect of the cultural infrastructure of Pennsylvania.

Objective II.4

Ensure that a PCA grant and teaching artist residency is delivered to every county, every year.

Objective II.5

Develop strategies to engage the field by geographic region, arts discipline and/or interest area (i.e. marketing, audience development and after-school) to address issues of common concern.

Goal Two continued

Objective II.6

Develop capacity building tools and identify best practices that can be shared and replicated. Learning about best practices in the field, from advisory panels and field wide research, is seen as an essential aspect of determining ways to increase organizational capacity.

Objective II.7

Explore opportunities to leverage cooperative buying by becoming a broker of services and products for Pennsylvania arts organizations.

Goal Three:

ADOPT

Broadening the role for arts in Pennsylvania communities. Adopting policies and practices that will enable the PCA and the arts in Pennsylvania to move forward.

Objective III.1

Further develop a role for Council members as advocates for the arts.

Objective III.2

Develop listening tour for Council members to interview policy makers.

Objective III.3

Develop a strategy for training in marketing to increase participation in the arts through more effective advertising and public relations; and, increase earned-income via greater participation.

Objective III.4

Promote and expand Poetry Out Loud (POL).

Objective III.5

Work with capital area arts organizations and artists to present events in the capitol complex to raise awareness of, participation in and support for the arts.

Objective III.6

Recognize the significant contributions of the arts by annually presenting the Governor's Arts Awards. Administering the Governor's Arts Awards enables the PCA to leverage its objectives and priorities, such as modeling accessibility, demonstrating best practices, and using funds raised by PCA to provide open captioning equipment that stays in the host community.

Objective III.7

Maintain or expand the Arts in Education Partnership focused on providing a range of services to schools and others as well as re-granting funds to support residencies and other education services. Explore the use of the Teacher and Artist Partnerships (TAPs) and Long Term Residencies (LTRs) as front runners for effective advocacy and marketing.

Objective III.8

Work with up to two counties or regions per year on their cultural planning.

Objective III.9

Leverage resources from other agencies of state government and inform the arts communities of the opportunities.

Objective III.10

Continue and develop relationships outside of the arts sector to leverage mutual goals and investments. The agency will actively seek to work with other state and local government entities and to build local and regional connections by providing community cultural planning services to assist in invigorating communities throughout Pennsylvania.



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