

Georgia Council for the Arts Strategic Plan Public Input Summary

Mission/Vision

GCA's mission statement, "Access to the arts for all Georgians with the primary responsibility to the state's nonprofit arts industry" is too broad. We believe that especially in a time of constrained finances all decisions should be driven by and connected to a clear mission statement that defines our priorities and also serves as the guidepost by which we chart the course of our growth.

*Support the arts for their intrinsic value and contribution to quality of life

*Be accountable and transparent

Build a sense of community through the arts; communicate how the arts contribute to a sense of community

Strengthen the public's perception of the arts and their relevance

Make art an everyday word/part of people's lives

Nurture creativity for all citizens

Help grow audiences for the arts

Support community arts and institutions

Support the cultivation and retention of professional Georgia artists; support new artists

Preservation of arts heritage—role should co-exist (arts and culture)

Maintain a diverse definition of the arts

*Be a financial support/advocate

*Make grants – these validate grantees

*Move away from "rural/urban" to different perspective on economic, access, etc.

Identify and fund excellence

Lead/help develop work with economic development in local communities – help all find ways to effectively partner with economic development

Play a role in educating community leaders, legislators about the value and economic impact of the arts and role of artists as economic contributors

Recognition of arts jobs/employment/results--voice for the "creative industries"

Support efforts that create measurable results – not just the nonprofit side

Build a "creative state" – placemaking; foster creative industries/jobs

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Focus on the arts regardless of tax status (not just support to nonprofits)

Lead creation of a statewide arts endowment fund

Leverage the university system, the K-12 schools and the arts community together towards economic development and stronger education. Work to retain our talent pool in Georgia.

Educate the arts community about ways to increase funding

Connect to the efforts/funding of CVBs/hotels to attract visitors and increase community impact

Collaborate with other state agencies for statewide benefit -- connect the arts to a greater network of state resources, but also create greater statewide benefit/value by incorporating the arts into other agencies' efforts

Support successful existing successful programs/organizations in order to build a case for future increased support for GCA

Incorporate measures of benefit into what is supported

*Be an advocate for the arts, and find resources, within state government; use STEAM theme

*Address the need for the role of the arts to be acknowledged by CVBs, Main Street programs, State Chamber of Commerce, tourism departments.

*Represent Georgia at the national level

*Ensure that government support is distributed broadly

*Information source—a network of friendly voices

*Create an image for Georgia Arts globally

*Be conveners of leaders of the arts

Advocate for professional artists/educators in local arts education systems

Promote and market the arts: both in general, and specific opportunities for people to experience the arts

Provide link to city planning/management/economic development organizations; elected officials and their associations--advocacy – help these leaders understand the value of supporting/incorporating the arts

Act as an advocate for the intangible significance and the tangible economic, social and personal benefits of the arts in the public, private and government sectors

*Promote arts to visitors

*Ongoing, stronger partnership with Department of Education leadership

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- *Recognize the broad spectrum of cultural arts (folk, culinary, etc.)
- *Identify and reward excellence
- *Identify and reward revolutionary voices
- *Bring us out of siloes/share resources (I believe this meant help organizations share resources amongst themselves); foster connections/be a clearinghouse
- *Provide resources, support, partners, ideas for artists and art organizations—especially the underserved
- *Facilitate and share best practices

Encourage collaboration between urban and rural communities/organizations/artists

Be an advisor/teammate in making organizations stronger. Provide technical assistance/mentoring/ board development

Provide service to nonprofits AND be a connection to the commercial side/private arts enterprises (provide connections and other resources to commercial side, but restrict GCA funding to nonprofits)

Arts Education

What is our long-term vision for supporting and revitalizing arts education initiatives and how do we achieve it?

- *Funder role is critical, especially for rural areas
- *Be a source for networking/referrals
- *Help people tap into existing organizations/networks; be a connector of and for the arts community
- *Establish an ongoing working relationship with the Department of Education--make sure the arts are realized as a viable career path, advocate for the arts within the department's planning of standards; measurable results
- *Don't be limited to K-12 – include afterschool, out-of-school and lifelong learning opportunities
- *Aggressively advocate for incorporation of arts funding, arts specialists (in all disciplines), arts facilities; push the integrated approach
- *Consistent advocacy plan to support arts education each year
- *Choose one of these priorities, not both: advocacy for arts education at a high level, or support for local programming

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*Work with Department of Labor on workforce development

*Recognize and promote best practices; research and investigate best practices

*Develop criteria for arts excellence

*Attract talented students and artists to Georgia to stay

Communicate/advocate for the importance of the arts in a child's education; share data/information

Connect the arts to other disciplines' standards and/or expand existing arts standards

Provide community arts organizations/non-schools information on program standards/best practices for their arts education programs

Help constituents access information such as programmatic connections to the standards

Connect to state networks such as PAGE (Professional Association of Georgia Educators) and National/state Association of Educators

Encourage standards in faculty/supplies/facilities

Help the arts tap into Innovation Grants in Race to the Top funding

Support after school programs

Research/investigate best practices and exemplars of arts standards utilized in other states

Add funding for After School programs in the long term vision for arts education

Help community arts agencies develop relationships with education leaders and schools; help build demand capacity

Connect arts education to issues meaningful to educators (e.g. emotional intelligence, bullying)

Help community arts agencies develop relationships with education leaders and schools. Many community/nonprofit arts organizations offer arts education services to schools/students but they not in enough demand. They aren't accessed by schools in the surrounding geographical area. Help build demand (and perhaps capacity).

Support professional arts educators, and support higher education for these careers

Provide a network and information for teaching artists, and a curriculum clearinghouse

Serve as a clearinghouse/collective to broker/negotiate for capital resources, artists and services

Provide an easily accessible list of funders

Schools need to be able to afford arts programs; artists need to be professionally compensated

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Provide a mechanism for finding affordable artistic resources

Provide lists of qualified resources in arts education, e.g. an artist roster

Provide annual convenings/idea sharing

Knowledge sharing – e.g. blogs in different arts areas/disciplines

Work towards partnerships and means of not competing with each other

Present a visiting artist program

Connect to commercial arts/entertainment and artists to attract and train students; connect to Film Commission

Recognition on a national level of Georgia artists (must grapple with current policy issue—work created in Georgia but presented outside of the state cannot have GCA support mentioned)

Be a clearinghouse of lifelong learning opportunities for adults

Measurable, specific multi-year goals. Shoot towards a time-based goal

Work with Georgia Department of Education on project-based learning

Support teacher training that will roll out to students

Utilize field volunteers/task forces for GCA

Provide training for people in local communities on how to advocate in their own communities

Teach us (arts organizations) how to lobby. What's the process? What can and cannot we do?

Provide artist in residence grants; connect organizations, artists and schools

Help build support for the arts as a profession

Craft one message/slogan; a central vision for all to communicate. Clarify to the public what “art” means (not just visual art)

Be an ongoing voice in a relationship with city and county education leaders. Target and hit the right people (i.e. most influential) to make a difference

Traditional Arts

What is our long-term vision for supporting the preservation and continuation of traditional arts and artists and how will we achieve it?

*Create a traditional arts advisory council for GCA

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*Serve as a connecting agency for traditional artists/communities/networks

*Build Georgia as an international destination for traditional arts

*State Folklife Festival to show, educate and celebrate traditional arts

*Documentation

Teach and show these art forms

Need to either use NEA Traditional Arts money or allow another organization to do so

Long-term plan to preserve, promote

Reinstitute the Mentorship program

Create State Folklorist position; have an on-staff folklorist to identify traditional arts resources, present and encourage traditional arts

Host a summit of organizations which are preserving cultures – identify their needs and what role GCA could play

Recognition of artists as resources

Link to educational initiatives

Tour the traditional artworks in the state collection across Georgia

Document existing preservation efforts and be a repository for the traditional arts practiced in the state and what documentation exists

Ensure a broad and diverse understanding of traditional arts, and its historical significance

Work in this area may be too large for GCA at this time

Strongly connect to tourism as what is “uniquely Georgia”; connect to the state’s existing tourism regions

Promote oral histories through funding documentation programs; provide information/training – build a repository of information on best practices; provide training in local advocacy

Support the sharing of existing resources (e.g. ABAC archives) – continue as a collaborator/connector

Roster of known and unknown traditional artists/artforms, with explanations of the people and traditions. Connect this information to history educators

Connect [artists/information] to local historical societies, perhaps as a location for local artists to show/sell their work

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Use the State Fair participants to collect information on traditional artists (since they are present there)

Lots of opportunity for new growth in traditional arts in Georgia-- can be leverage for broader state/national awareness, in that Georgia's traditional arts are unique and marketable

Arts Organizations

What are the needs of the arts community and what are the arts needs of underserved communities? How can GCA identify underserved audiences in our state and how do we support increased access to quality programs, the engagement of new audiences and programs that reflect the diversity of our citizens?

*General Operating Support

*In grants, prioritize funding to organizations [e.g. GOS] over program support

*Work with the media to enable us to tell and relate our own stories

*Workshops to know how to interface with schools and the underserved

*Assistance for small, low budget, non-programmatic organizations

*Well-served areas still have certain populations that are underserved

Provide tools for organizations to work with chambers of commerce/tourism/merchant associations

Help arts organizations advocate and understand why they should

Provide arts organizations with canned presentation, consistent message, shared and powerful language that all can use.

Business management aspects – advise and provide support for organizations

Support the professional development of organizations

Provide forums and technical assistance for capacity-building and sustainability

Assist organizations with clearinghouse of information, staff assistance, particularly in organizational development (information, not necessarily funding)

List of peers/colleagues to provide expertise/assistance (*e.g. a peer consultant roster*)

Help organizations build participation/audiences/appreciation for the arts

Support volunteer organizations that provide art to the community, i.e. board development; operational funding

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Invest more funding in organizational [not project] grants

Expand film tax credits program to include the live performing arts

Provide support in every county, à la GAP; creates a valuable network

Consider emerging organizations

Position/support ways for arts providers to serve their geographically surrounding areas

Create a membership opportunity for organizations/artists to join GCA, outside of the grants program; another way to receive an endorsement; could be connected to the campaign idea – join the campaign, become a GCA “member”

Support statewide networks, both new and existing

Encourage a focus on connecting the arts and tourism [but be careful about sublimating the arts]

Conduct umbrella state marketing campaign

Conduct a statewide project through state Department of Economic Development around audience development – spotlight successes

Begin dialogue about a state endowment (source of ongoing non-appropriated funds)

Incorporate the arts into the state’s image campaign. Create a statewide campaign for the arts with one clear, unified message—each community can help implement the campaign

Help sustain networks/umbrellas for local assistance, potentially through regional levels of support

Connect to Georgia Historical Society, Georgia Humanities Council. Map the state’s cultural assets and needs; view the overlap and the gaps, work within state resources and with outside partners to find ways to fill the gaps

Artist Support

How can we best support our state’s artists? What programs, trainings, and resources can we offer?

*Create and promote an Artists’ Bank. Even if it’s not attached to grants, it provides visibility

*Survey existing services first, then support who’s already doing it

*Benefits package for artists; emergency services, etc

*Artist in Residency program

*Provide business training/development – recognize, and encourage the recognition of, artists as entrepreneurs--look at models such as Alternate ROOTS’

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Provide technology training (such as Fractured Atlas')

Highlight individual artists on website

Use models such as chambers of commerce

Connect artists to existing conduits of information and support

Be a conduit for people/organizations to find information on artists

Provide technical and project support directly to artists

Support artists to reach underserved communities

Train artists in the core curriculum and expectations of DOE

Connect artist support to GCA's other objectives

Identify and spotlight excellent Georgia artists and leverage economic development opportunities

Leverage Department's tech resources to help artists/arts organizations; make their doing/getting business easier; connect to technology; apply technology in their work

Be a force to encourage private investment – e.g. venture capital loans

Provide artists with direct contact to funders/funding sources

Recognition on a national level of Georgia artists (must grapple with current policy issue – work created in Georgia but presented outside of the state cannot have GCA support mentioned)

Be active with Georgia Presenters network

Provide an Artist Roster/resource to identify artists, including traditional artists

Support them through community and school artist residencies (consider artists' experience); connect to school board

Share best practices to help LAAs support local artists (how to set up artist co-ops, etc.)

Expanded ways to distribute artwork, provide sales and promotion opportunities

Opportunities for artists to tell their stories through different media

Newsletter of events/opportunities. Community calendar of events. Centralized information. List calls for artists in GCA website

Program to "swap" artists/galleries between communities (an artist exchange program)

Gather artists together; provide opportunities for artists to see/visit other places and work

Campaign to incorporate arts exhibits into non-arts festivals in the state

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Grants

What should GCA's main goals be with their Grants funding? As GCA intends to revise the grant criteria to align with the new mission developed through this process, which mission ideas are priorities?

*Grants should acknowledge artistic excellence

*Make grant applications easier. Provide mini-grants with simpler application/reporting requirements

*Help identify community resources/investors to help grant recipients with the match

*Funding – be creative about funding. Identify places where funding exists (21st Century grants, Boys & Girls Club, etc.) and where the arts can help achieve their goals to collaborate. Find case studies of where this is happening. Find these projects and make information easily available and accessible. Connect arts services to those who need them; let them know how the arts can help them achieve their goals.

*Provide grants that are accessible to small organizations through simple application process (i.e. Grassroots program)

*Continue tourism product development grants

Continue General Operating Support; look at multiyear grants

Prioritize projects after GOS

Re-examine the GOS funding formula to not disadvantage small organizations

Community Grant Program was very valuable: it provided expansive opportunities for partners, ensure both dedicated staff and funding from both partners

Allow organizations to access multiple grant sources from GCA

Grant criteria and commensurate funding awards should be based on excellence, outreach, education – not the organization's budget size

Connect touring artists and networks of arts organizations – do a solid survey of them to make them comprehensive

Direct proportional funding to Congressional districts [Rather than formula/merit method]

Be an advocate for municipal funding

Support organizations that provide broad access/participation *and* educational components.

Make excellence one of the funding criterion, or its own funding category. Excellence can be in execution as well as artistic. (There was side-talk after the meeting about how panels aren't

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necessarily good at judging artistic excellence and that it can be relative to the community/community tastes.)

Connect constituents to other financial and marketing resources (CVBs, Tourism, etc.)

Share information on all GCA projects/grants/partnerships, so others can benefit (lessons learned, best practices, etc.)

Focus on accomplishable goals and measure them well

The grant application process must have enough benefit (size of grant) to warrant the time spent. Now the benefit is outweighed by the time and data needed for applications and final reports. People believe there are organizations not applying that feel it's prohibitive either in the difficulty or lack of benefit

Provide two tiers of grant-making: 1) Small, symbolic grants with simpler applications; 2) Large grants with more rigorous process

Consider re-granting processes, working within large networks

Grants for collaborative programs. Connect geographically-distant organizations through collaborative programs. If partnership applications are offered, they may be designed to lower some of the existing grant application barriers (complexity)

Discussion of fewer large grants or more smaller grants: general consensus that for now, fewer large grants to create and demonstrate more impact is the priority. Be cautious that this isn't interpreted as focusing primarily on large organizations. Look at the potential of the project/applicant not their limitations. Look at other creative revenue. Create a vision of success. Add back in smaller grants when more funds become available. Create a domino-style grants strategy. A layered strategy.

The meaning of grants is not just the money, but the credibility they bring

Promote grants for partnerships that serve a particular underserved community – help to reduce duplication of services

GCA grants provide oversight and credibility

Build a larger grants budget (discussion of need for external advocacy to make this happen)

Grant criteria: a) Local partnerships b) Financial health/history/stability c) Evidence of community partnerships d) Non-duplication of services

Connect criteria for projects to arts education

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Wrap-up

What leadership is required of GCA, or programming is needed, that we have not thought of or addressed previously?

*Fill GCA's open personnel slots

Three main points: 1) Educate people; 2) Provide connections; 3) Larger grants with more impact, for now

Opportunities for aging Georgians to participate as creators (not just audiences)

Navigate forms/processes within state government (e.g. simpler procurement processes for GCA to work with artists/organizations)

Break lists/data down to county level [for use in local advocacy/education]

Educate legislature and Governor about the fractional sales tax legislation – this has long-term impact!

Plan now for a strongly conceived budget increase request at a later/the right time

Better promotion of artist opportunities

Contribute to developing qualified film/TV artists and production staff in the state

Create an environment where people/communities solve problems through the arts.

Provide scholarships to the AFTA Conference

Facilitator's Summary

Participants see an opportunity for the GCA to be an advocate within state government and connect to other state departments and resources, as well as re-assert its position as a funder. In addition to funding, there is a great deal of interest in:

- Providing visibility for Georgia's artists, particularly to develop and retain them within the state
- Serving as a nexus for information, best practices and resources, ranging from arts marketing and advocacy for arts organizations, to professional development, technology training and access to insurance for individual artists
- Furthering public policy that incorporates the arts, including the fractional sales tax option, education and workforce development, and maximizing opportunities within the Department of Tourism (but carefully)
- Breaking down siloes between urban and rural communities through statewide networking and services

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- Creation of a clear public message and campaign about the value/relevance of the arts, which would be implemented by arts organizations across the state.
- Throughout the conversation the theme of “focus and do it well” was heard.
- A main theme/idea was the creation of a clear public message and campaign about the value/relevance of the arts, which would be implemented by arts organizations across the state.