ARTS ADVOCACY 101
Engage Educate Demystify

Californians for the Arts
California Arts Advocates
INFORMED ADVOCACY

• Basic facts & definitions

• Tips & Techniques to building relationships
Lobbying refers specifically to efforts that attempt to influence legislation.

Advocacy is the active support of an idea or cause expressed through strategies and methods that influence the opinions and decisions of people, legislators, policy makers and organizations. It’s about communication, education, relationship building and storytelling and is best accomplished by having many people voice their concerns.
Advocacy 101

It is perfectly ok as a non-profit organization to …

• **Thank & Criticize:** publicly thank legislators who vote in line with your advocacy agenda or criticize those who do not. Use social media, Twitter and tag them.

• **Show up** at offices, town halls and ask questions.

• **Set up** your own town hall and invite your elected.

• **Stage** a public demonstration.

• **Register** voters.

• **Sponsor** a debate if all candidates can attend.
“Meanwhile, a colleague of mine texted to tell me that at her new-employees orientation, the new staff were told “We are a 501c3, so we cannot do any lobbying or advocacy.” (This is completely untrue). I have seen countless grant contracts and RFPs now that actively discourage lobbying and advocacy. I called up a program officer once asking why this language was in the contract. ‘Well, it’s not that we’re against advocacy—in fact, we support it—we just don’t want our money to be expressively used for that purpose.’

This is the problem. Our sector is afraid of advocacy, much less politics.”

Vu, Non Profit AF, April 13, 2020
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Who to Get to Know:

- Local Elected Representatives: Mayor, City Council Members, County Board of Supervisors, School Board

- Local Arts Leaders: Arts Commission, Arts Council, Local arts agency, regional advocacy orgs, philanthropists, funders

- State Legislators and Administration: Assemblymembers and State Senators

- Congressional Representatives: Your district House rep and State Senators
How to Build Relationships

- **Do not underestimate** the value of developing a relationship to staff. They are often the people informing the elected about issues and are given portfolios to study. Become a conduit of information for the staffer!

- **Attend public meetings & speak** during public comments.

- **Attend fundraisers or rallies** for elected officials.

- **Ask for a meeting** in district.

- **Invite them** to your events.

- **Recognize them** for being an arts advocate.

- **Find out** what committees legislators are on so that you can target the right official for your issue and know who can make or break a piece of legislation. (Budget & Arts, workforce development).

- **Follow your elected officials** on Twitter and social media and get to know their interests and voice – tag them!
Communication Tips

• Be respectful.

• Ask for advice.

• **Come prepared** with your facts and compelling story.

• **Understand the landscape.** When is the budget decided? When are bills introduced?

• **Find out all you can** about their special interests and favorite causes. This information will help you tailor your presentation to legislators' personal interests.

• **Be clear** on what you are asking for and how you will help them to get the support they need.
Finding Partners

- **Collaborating across different sectors** on the same issues builds solidarity in advocacy efforts

- **Engage business and community leaders** in using their positions to influence decision-makers and become spokespeople and advocates for learning through the arts

- **Media Partners:** Develop a relationship with your local media to become a source of information and expertise.
CRAFTING YOUR PITCH

Make it local and relevant. Discuss current challenges as well as those on the horizon and be honest about the severity of the situation.
Crafting your Pitch:

Why the Arts?

• **Share why arts are essential:** Who do you serve, what is your impact on social services and communities disproportionately impacted by COVID. How are artists 2nd responders?

• **Discuss how the arts build and strengthen communities and economies.** For a simple calculation on your organization’s economic impact, multiply each attendee x $31.47 in event-related spending (meals, parking, retail, etc. to get a total estimated audience spend figure).
Ways to Connect

**Phone** your legislator’s office and ask, “what are they doing to support the arts in their district?” and encourage them to support a specific ask or to learn more about you.  
**Tip:** Don’t know who represents you? [Look here.](#)

**Write:** Use our online template letter system and send letters/tweets asking for funding support and legislation.  
**Tip:** This takes less than 5 minutes.

**Meet:** Ask for a virtual meeting with your legislator and use our guides or contact us and we can help you set it up!  
**Tip:** You may meet with a staff member. They are valuable people to get to know and they will give their boss a report on the meeting.
EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

Advocacy comes in many forms, from the disrupters to the negotiators, everyone has a story to tell and a role to play if passion is your guide and change is your goal.
5 Steps to Effective Advocacy

1. Plan Your Campaign
2. Create Awareness
3. Generate Engagement
4. Encourage Action
5. Sustain the Momentum
Five Steps to Effective Advocacy

1. PLAN YOUR CAMPAIGN
   • State your Goals, (what is the change you want to see?)
   • Identify Targets (for whom are you doing this)
   • Identify Resources (capacity, funding, time)
   • Identify Partners/Opponents
   • Know the Process, Be Informed, (who are the decision makers?)

2. CREATE AWARENESS
   • Design your Key Messages
   • Build your case with data and storytelling
   • Determine communications strategy (op-eds, letters to the editor, social media campaign, etc.)
Five Steps to Effective Advocacy

3. GENERATE ENGAGEMENT
   - Share your advocacy toolkit
   - Get others to share your message
   - Communicate with your advocates

4. ENCOURAGE ACTIONS
   - What is the ask – where and when should you make it?
   - Determine tactics (ex. rally or behind the scenes meetings or both)
   - Read the room: is it time to be aggressive or is time to build consensus

5. SUSTAIN THE MOMENTUM
   - Organize, Show Up, Be Consistent
   - Be Flexible
   - Be Hopeful
ADVOCACY TODAY

Important data points & priorities for State & Local Advocacy

JOIN US!
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that in 2017, the arts and culture sector contributed $230.3 billion to California’s economy, representing 8.2% of the state’s GDP—a larger share of the state’s economy than Construction ($102 billion), or Transportation ($72 billion).

2020 Otis Report on the Creative economy states 15.4% of all jobs (2.7 million) in California are in the creative industries, generating $650.3 billion in total annual output per year.
Data Points for State Arts Funding Need in CA

California currently ranks 23rd among the states in per capita ongoing general fund support for the arts with .71 cents per capita in spending, according to the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

There are over 11,000 non-profit arts organizations in CA. CAC was only able to fund 12% of the total arts organizations in California by June of 2019.

According to Cal Nonprofits, more than 50% of non-profit arts organizations have annual revenue below $106,500.

Use our Impact Survey Key Findings to show the impact of COVID 19 on artists and arts organizations.
The arts make our local economies stronger. Public investment in arts workers & arts organizations is key to the region’s economic recovery. The arts & culture sector generated ___ for our regional economy in 2019 and provided 1 in ___ jobs in the region.

The arts make our communities healthier. Public investment in arts workers & arts organizations helps our communities heal. A recent study found that the arts result in a 66% improvement in individuals experiencing depression, 50% improvement in anxiety symptoms, and an 83% decrease of stress.

Arts make our communities more equitable. Public investment in arts workers & arts organizations is an urgent equity issue. Studies show that arts + culture make students 5x more likely to graduate high school, lower neighborhood crime rates by up to 18%, and increase civic participation by 2x.
State Advocacy Priorities

• Reopening Guidelines for the Live Events/Performing Arts industries

• Jobs Creation for arts workers: SUPPORT: CA CREATIVE CORPS Pilot ($15m) and Legislation CA Creative Workforce Act SB 628 (Senator Ben Allen)

• Increased long term funding for the arts. SUPPORT: $1 for the Arts! (Assm. Sharon Quirk Silva budget letter introduced 2/19)

• Funding to Reopen Safely
Advocacy Priorities

• Continued Federal & State Stimulus funding (ARP Local funding for arts & culture)

• Infrastructure & employment systems to support living wage and housing/food security and mental health for artists.

• To radically reimagine business models, hiring practices, board recruitment, policies, resources and programs centered in racial and cultural equity

• New program delivery models and technical training & support
How can you Engage?

• Use our toolkits and templates to advocate to the Legislature and Administration for Funding; Relief & Ongoing, for CA Recovery

• Share our social media posts and tag your legislators

• Join us! April is Arts, Culture & Creativity Month
THE ARTS ARE AN ESSENTIAL INDUSTRY!
From a Campaign to a Movement: Arts Advocacy Today

CALIFORNIA
Arts, Culture, & Creativity Month
APRIL 2021

APRIL 19-23
Advocacy Week

APRIL 27
Virtual Convening

CALIFORNIANS FOR THE ARTS
AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS
ARTS FOR LA
ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS
BE AN ARTS HERO
CREATECA
CALIFORNIA ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION
CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS
CALIFORNIA PRESENTERS
LEAGUE OF AMERICAN ORCHESTRAS
NIVA
THEATRE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP
TBA, TPPLA
ARTISTS ARE 2ND RESPONDERS

Thank you!
For more info visit:
californiansforthearts.org