

# Massachusetts Cultural Council

## *Strategic Plan 2005-2010*

### Mission

The mission of the Massachusetts Cultural Council is to promote excellence, access, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences, in order to improve the quality of life for all Massachusetts residents and to contribute to the economic vitality of our communities.

### Vision

The Massachusetts Cultural Council believes that the arts, sciences, and humanities have the power to build healthier, more livable, more vital communities. They enrich, exalt and provoke. They are an essential part of a strong educational system. They contribute enormously to our economy. They build bridges across cultures. They can be used to address – or better yet, prevent – some of our most stubborn social problems. They help us interpret our past and shape our future. They help us understand what it means to be human.

The Massachusetts Cultural Council is committed to promoting a central place for the arts, sciences and humanities in the everyday lives of communities across the Commonwealth. The Council pursues this mission through a combination of grant programs, partnerships and services for nonprofit cultural organizations, schools, communities and individual artists.

### Goals

- To increase the pool of financial resources – public and private – available for the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences across the Commonwealth.
- To invest state dollars in cultural organizations, local cultural councils, schools, and artists.
- To help cultural organizations, local cultural councils, schools, and artists develop tools, skills, and relationships they need to increase cultural participation and thrive in the 21st century.
- To expand awareness and understanding of the power of the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences in building healthy, livable communities.

## To increase the pool of financial resources – public and private – available for the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences across the Commonwealth.

- Maximize the Massachusetts Cultural Council's state and federal appropriations, in order to increase funds available for MCC grants and services.
- Support and encourage efforts by other public agencies, private grantmakers, municipalities, and individuals to increase their own support for the arts, sciences, and humanities in the state.
- Promote statewide programs and policies that encourage schools, districts, and communities to make deeper financial commitments to arts education.
- Aggressively promote new and increased public and private investments in cultural facilities and workspaces for artists.

## To invest state dollars in cultural organizations, schools, and artists through increased funding for the following:

- The **Organizational Support** Program, to support public programs of not-for-profit cultural organizations with track records of excellence and community service.
- The **Local Cultural Council** Program, to promote efforts to make the arts, sciences, and humanities part of everyday life in every city and town in the state.
- The **Artist Grants** Program, to support the development of Massachusetts artists – the individuals at the core of our cultural community.
- The **Creative Schools** Program and the **YouthReach** Initiative, to promote the education and development of our young people, both in school and out of school.
- The **John and Abigail Adams Arts** Program, to promote economic development and job creation through the arts, sciences, and humanities.
- Other grant programs initiated in response to the needs of our constituents – as opportunities and resources allow.

To help cultural organizations, local cultural councils, schools, and artists develop tools, skills, and relationships they need to increase cultural participation and thrive in the 21st century.

- Provide workshops, seminars, and one-on-one assistance for cultural organizations, local cultural councils, artists, and educators, to enhance their effectiveness, visibility, and long-term survival.
- Develop practical web-based tools to support the work of artists, cultural organizations, local cultural councils, and educators, and to facilitate business transactions within the cultural community.
- Provide opportunities for cultural leaders of all kinds to meet and learn from each other, creating networks that foster collaboration and cooperation.
- Help artists and cultural organizations integrate their work into school curricula and school cultures.
- Support, promote, and build public appreciation for the cultural traditions and expressions of the many diverse populations in Massachusetts.

To expand awareness and understanding of the power of the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences in building healthy, livable communities.

- Demonstrate the role of arts and culture in community development, economic development, youth development, education, and health care, both by funding innovative projects and by promoting the lessons learned and best practices within these projects.
- Build relationships with leaders in the fields of human services, community development, economic development, education, and healthcare to build the broadest possible coalition of advocates for the arts, sciences, and humanities in our communities.
- Provide current, pertinent information to cultural leaders and to the general public about the health of the cultural sector and the state of arts education in Massachusetts.
- Provide information and communication tools to local cultural councils, cultural organizations, arts educators, and artists to help them tell the story of the public benefits of their work.

# Did you know?



- Annually, Massachusetts cultural nonprofits provide nearly 37,000 jobs, collect and pay \$6.6 million in state sales taxes, and have a total economic impact of over \$4.2 billion.<sup>1</sup>
- Nearly 95% of Massachusetts voters see the arts as a basic part of a child's education – as basic as English and mathematics.<sup>2</sup>
- Students highly engaged in the arts do better in school and are more involved in their communities.<sup>3</sup>
- The arts reach students who are at risk of failure by connecting them to themselves, each other, and their communities.<sup>4</sup>
- Workers trained in arts and culture drive the success of leading Massachusetts industries, including software development, telecommunications, and new media industries.<sup>5</sup>
- Among the most disadvantaged neighborhoods, those with high levels of cultural participation are more likely to have low rates of juvenile delinquency and truancy.<sup>6</sup>
- Participating in the arts captivates and inspires us, strengthens our ties with others, and helps us, individually and collectively, to wonder at the possibilities of what might be.

1. "New England's Creative Economy: The Non-Profit Sector," 2002, by Gregory H. Wassall Ph.D. and Douglas DeNatale Ph.D., New England Foundation for the Arts, 2005.
2. Public Opinion Poll, University of Massachusetts, 2004. "Involvement in the Arts and Success in Secondary Schools," by James S. Caterall, Ph.D., Americans for the Arts, 1998.
3. "Champions of Change: The Impact of Arts on Learning," Arts Education Partnership and the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, 1999.
4. "Creative Economy Initiative: The Role of the Arts and Culture in New England's Economic Competitiveness," The New England Council, 2000.
5. "Culture Builds Community: Evaluation Summary Report," by Mark J. Stern and Susan C. Seifert, Social Impact of the Arts Project, University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work, 2002.
6. "The Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate About the Benefits of the Arts," by Kevin F. McCarthy, Elizabeth H. Ondaatje, Laura Zakaras, and Arthur Brooks, The RAND Corporation, 2004.

For more information on the Massachusetts Cultural Council, or to view more details on the Strategic Plan, please go to:

[www.massculturalcouncil.org](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org)

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