

## **Fiscal Year 2019 State Budget Request**

The Mass Cultural Council requests a **state appropriation of \$17 million for FY19**, a \$3 million increase from the current fiscal year. The agency will put these funds to work toward a Commonwealth where:

- Culture elevates the quality of life and well-being of all communities
- Culture drives growth and opportunity through the creative economy
- Culture is inclusive, equitable, and embraces our diversity
- Culture empowers a new generation through creative youth development and education

Investing in the arts, humanities, and sciences through Mass Cultural Council delivers significant returns to the Commonwealth. Nonprofit cultural organizations help drive local economies, from Greater Boston, to Gateway Cities, to our rural and coastal communities, generating over \$2.2 billion dollars in annual economic activity. These organizations support 73,000 full time jobs, and generate more than \$159 million in local and state tax revenue, according to the 2016 Arts and Economic Prosperity Report.

In our schools, arts education improves student achievement, well-being, and school climate. Afterschool programs in the arts, humanities, and sciences—creative youth development—help steer at-risk youth away from trouble and into stable, successful adulthood. Finally, perhaps most importantly, culture plays a central role in helping our citizens discover timeless truths about themselves and the world we share.

The Mass Cultural Council (*line item 0640-0300*) will put a \$3 million increase in FY19 to work in these areas through a range of grant programs and services, focusing on these four key goals in the agency's five-year strategic plan\*:

**Goal 1: Enriching Communities: Amplify cultural vitality in cities and towns through integrated community-focused grants, initiatives, and advocacy.**  
**New Investment for FY19: \$1 million**

The Mass Cultural Council will increase grants to its 329 Local Cultural Councils, the nation's largest network of community arts support led by 2,500 volunteers in

every city and town. Currently LCCs are able to fund just over half of the thousands of quality proposals for community arts initiatives they receive.

In tandem with boosting LCC grants, we will invest in our 45 Mass Cultural Districts, engines of community cultural development in cities and towns across the Commonwealth. And we will work closely with six cities and towns on a new Cultural Compact to align local cultural development with community goals. The aim is to amplify cultural vitality in cities and towns through integrated community-focused planning, grantmaking, and programming.

**Goal 2: Growing the Creative Economy: Enhance the Commonwealth's economic vitality by helping cultural organizations and artists thrive.**

**New Investment for FY19: \$1 million**

Mass Cultural Council will reinvest in its core operating support program for nonprofits: the Cultural Investment Portfolio. These grants to nearly 400 organizations provide more fuel for our museums, theaters, music centers, and historic sites—major engines for the Commonwealth's cultural tourism sector. Additional grant dollars will also allow our smaller nonprofits—which make up the bulk of our funding—to develop new programs, hire new staff and contractors, and strengthen their finances. And we will also continue to fund new and emerging organizations seeking funding for the first time.

**Goal 3: Empowering a Creative Generation: Enhance creative learning experiences in schools and communities that instill agency in, and support the growth of, creative, productive, independent-minded young people.**

**New Investment for FY19: \$750,000**

We seek to increase investment in Creative Youth Development, nationally recognized programs that use the power of the arts, humanities, and sciences to help young people learn, grow, and thrive. These include:

- YouthReach and SerHacer—learning through music, visual arts, science and many other disciplines alongside deliberate youth development practices, targeting low-income and other underserved youth.
- STARS Residencies—grants bring qualified teaching artists and history and science educators into schools for extended learning programs. These grants up to \$5,000 are immensely popular with teachers and principals at all levels of K-12 education.
- Big Yellow School Bus—small grants to offset school transportation costs for field trips to cultural venues, serving more than 50,000 students yearly.

**Goal 4: Advancing Inclusion and Equity: Promote more diverse and inclusive participation in the cultural sector by ensuring equity in policies, practices, and opportunities.**

**New Investment for FY19: \$250,000**

We will deepen investments in our Universal Participation (UP) Initiative, which supports a growing cohort of cultural nonprofits that are breaking down barriers to participation through inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible policies and practices. And we will fund a new UP Award to recognize and financially support organizations in this cohort that best illustrate the core principles of the UP Initiative. Funding will also help us implement a new plan to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion at the agency and across the field, building on partnerships and initiatives like the EBT Card to Culture.

**Background:**

Mass Cultural Council is a state agency that promotes excellence, education, diversity, and inclusion in the arts, humanities, and sciences, to improve our quality of life and contribute to the vitality of our communities and economy. It pursues this mission through a wide range of grants, initiatives, and advocacy for artists, communities, organizations, and schools. Its FY18 budget is \$15 million, which includes a \$14 million state appropriation and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. The agency also runs the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund (CFF) in partnership with MassDevelopment, with a separate, \$10 million allocation from the state's capital budget.

*\* By statute all final budget allocations must be approved by members of the Cultural Council, who are appointed by the Governor.*