

New Yorkers for Culture & Arts
NY4CA.org

To attend a planned rally on the steps of City Hall:

Enter at the security gates on the east side (across from onramp to Brooklyn Bridge) or the west side (at Broadway and Murray Street). You will not be allowed to enter with any objects beyond a purse/backpack/briefcase with papers and laptops. No musical instruments, poles for banners, electronic speakers, etc.

Be sure you know the name of the rally (ie, the rally for culture funding) and any hearing you plan on testifying at (ie, the Cultural Affairs Committee meeting on the budget)

There will be posters provided, though you can also bring your own. The general theme for culture rallies is "Culture For All"

Try to arrive a few minutes early in case there is a line to enter; but be prepared to wait until the designated rally or hearing time for the guards to admit you.

How to register to testify at a hearing:

You must register no less than 24 hours before the hearing. You can sign up here:

<https://council.nyc.gov/testify/>

Simply choose the hearing at which you'd like to testify from the drop down menu.

Note that even though you are asked to upload your testimony when you register, you can skip that step and submit later if your testimony is not yet finished.

If you are testifying virtually, email your testimony on the day of the hearing to testimony@council.nyc.gov

Make sure you note the date and hearing title in the subject line AND include your contact info in the testimony doc.

Finally, it's great if you can also email your testimony to the chair of the hearing, any key Councilmembers, and your own Council Member. [Here](#)'s a list of Council Member email addresses---scroll to the bottom of the web page.

If attending the hearing is in person, great to register in advance, but not required. You go down to City Hall at the time of the hearing. Enter either at the east side security gate, across from across from the Brooklyn Bridge; or at the west side security gate at Broadway and Murray Street. Go through a gated entrance with a metal detector and give the guard the name of the hearing you are attending.

Once inside, the hearings are on the 2nd floor, in either the main chambers or in a smaller room off to the right. You sign up to speak at the desk labeled "Seargent At Arms". You will then wait to be called. It could be anywhere from an hour to more than 5 hours till you are called! Hearings during budget season are typically longer.

You should have your testimony printed out and make 20 copies for the Committee. If you have to leave before testifying, you can drop your written testimony and copies with the Sergeant at Arms. (You can also email your testimony as per the advice above)

NOTE: if you cannot testify, you can email your statement up to 72 hours after the time of the hearing. Be sure to include your name, contact info, date and title of the hearing and committee. Email it to testimony@council.nyc.gov

Advice for testifying before City Council:

Most testimony is limited to two minutes total. You can have more information in your written statement, but will only have 2 min to say the highlights in testimony. It's good to be strategic to ensure you catch the Council's attention and deliver your message. Here are some recommendations:

--Super short meaningful picture of your impact: ie, "We teach arts to 700 public school children in the Bronx. A former student wrote last week saying her classes with us kept her interested in school, and that she just graduated from college."

NOTE: Undoubtedly your organization has many different programs impacting many different populations. Now is not the time to list them all; choose one central part of your mission for this testimony. You can include the full list in the written statement.

--A few specifics on what you are doing to serve your community, ie. "Our free performances provide much needed community-strengthening, enriching experiences to families in the area."

--No matter what policy or funding you are testifying about, great to paint a picture of your impact with clear stories with clear data/statistics if available.

If you'd like to use data on the impact of arts and culture, here are some headlines.

In NYC (pre COVID)

The creative economy in NYC employs more than 300,000 people*

It generates \$110B in economic activity for the city*

Neighborhoods with cultural assets show better outcomes for education, aging, crime, health, and community well being.**

[This is a sheet of powerful data](#) headlines regarding economic impact of culture and its benefits to communities.

*Comptroller's Report on the Creative Economy 2019

**Social Impact of the Arts Project; UPenn

***Center for an Urban Future