

How to Use this document:

- ☐ **Download your own copy**
- ☐ Meet with advocates to review and select 2-4 Policy Priorities to discuss with lawmaker
- ☐ Review and assign related Talking Points to advocates most relevant to your group - choose those that convey the story you want to tell
- ☐ Delete any items you won't use to create your own meeting script

Ideal Meeting Structure

1. **Meeting Kickoff** (2-10 minutes)
 - a. Introductions
 - b. Thank Yous
 - c. Context talking points
2. **Policy Discussion: 1-4 policies** (5-20 minutes)
 - a. Background points and/or your Impact Story
 - b. The Ask - always give them an action to take
3. **Closing** (2-5 minutes)
 - a. Thanks Yous
 - b. Identify any follow up steps
 - c. Take a photo

Policy Priorities Check List

Below is the list of CA Arts Advocates Policy Priorities. Select 2 - 4 policies to discuss, depending time and what is important to your group. Links jump to that section in this document.

Budget Items

- ☐ [Restore \\$5M to CA Arts Council](#)
- ☐ [Restore \\$5M to CA Cultural Districts](#)
- ☐ [Restore \\$27.9M to Museum Grant Program](#)

Bills to Strengthen CA Nonprofits

- ☐ [AB 265 -Disaster recovery fund](#)
- ☐ [AB 880 - Improve State grants](#)
- ☐ [AB 1039 - Advance payments](#)

Bills to Strengthen CA Creative Economy

- ☐ [SB 456 - Save Arts Jobs & CA Murals](#)
- ☐ [AB-1349 - Fairness in ticketing](#)
- ☐ [SB 630/AB 1138 - Film tax credits](#)
- ☐ [AB 507 - Adaptive reuse for housing and artist space](#)

Topics to Educate Lawmakers On

- ☐ [Arts Jobs Programs](#): CA Creative Corps, Performing Arts Equitable Payroll Fund, Arts in the Parks
- ☐ [Policy Innovations for Artists & Gig Workers](#)
- ☐ [Integrating Arts & Health](#)

Talking Points

*Here are Talking Points for your meeting topics and the Policy Priorities. Use what resonates with you and your priorities. Add your insights and impact stories. **Make the meeting your own!***

Meeting Kick Off

Introductions

- We are here with CA for the Arts, a statewide network of 20,000 plus arts supporters representing artists, creative workers, and cultural organizations, CA Arts Advocates, a comprehensive lobbying organization and Create CA, California's largest state-wide advocacy organization for arts education in K-12 public schools.
- April is the state-designated Arts, Culture, & Creativity Month, and we're here to discuss the creative community's challenges and priorities.
- All advocates introduce themselves in one to two sentences.
Example: "Hi, I'm __ and I live in __. I am the __ of __."
- Ask about their connection to the arts, or some prompt to make a personal connection

Thank Yous

- We thank you/the legislature.* Over the past several years, the Legislature and the Governor have responded to the multiple crises facing the creative sector with unprecedented relief funding and cross-agency programs that have provided a lifeline for thousands of art workers.
- *Know whether your lawmaker is a freshman or not to phrase your thank yous accordingly.
- Add any Thank Yous specific to your legislator.

Context Points

- **Arts, culture and creativity are vital to the state's identity and economy.** Arts & culture industries drive 7.5% of our state's economy, contributing over \$289 billion in economic activity and supporting one in ten jobs in the state.
- **Sustained state investment in our sector has not matched our impact.** We rank 35th in per person spending on the arts in terms of State funding for local grants issued through the California Arts Council (CAC).
- **Current state arts funding levels are lower than they were two decades ago and are simply not sufficient to meet the needs of the state.**
- **Our state is at risk of losing its cultural assets and creative edge.** California's creative sector is challenged by rising costs, housing affordability and revenue disruptions due to impacts like climate change, creative industry shifts and an overall decrease in philanthropic and public support. These pressures are destabilizing organizations and displacing artists from their communities and even from the state.
- **California needs policies that protect the jobs and rights of arts workers, increase access to affordable housing and workspaces and strengthen its nonprofit sector.** CA Arts Advocates joins numerous coalition partners in urging for the support of the following 2025-26 legislation.

Policy Priorities - Budget Items

Restore \$5 million to the California Arts Council

Background points:

- In 2024-25, the state cut funding to the California Arts Council (CAC) by \$5m for a two year period.
- CAC funding for local assistance grants - that is the money that goes to arts groups in every district in the state - was reduced from \$26M to \$21M. That is just 53¢ per person to serve the entire state.
- At that level, California ranks #35th in the nation in arts spending, while being #1 in the nation for arts jobs and #1 for the creative economy's contribution to the state economy.
- CAC funding reaches all districts in the state and is more equitably distributed than private funding, providing access to the arts and opportunities to work in the creative economy for all Californians. For marginalized or rural communities, CAC grants can be the only arts funding available.

Add your insights or impact story: *Why is funding for the CAC important to you or your community?*

The Ask:

- Assemblymember Chris Ward and Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas have submitted budget request letters, asking the Governor to restore the \$5M in funding in the 2025-26 budget.
- Will you support restoring the \$5M to the CAC?
- The CAC turns fifty next year! Can we count on your future support for increasing CAC's budget to \$40 million, so we are investing \$1 per person?

Restore \$5 million to California Cultural Districts

Background points:

- Administered through the California Arts Council (CAC), the California Cultural District program was established by legislation in 2015 and was launched in 2017 with the designation of 14 districts.
- After a five-year pilot period, the program was supposed to receive first-time funding in 2021-22, budgeted at \$10M a year for three years to expand the program to include more California communities. The Governor's 23-24 budget reduced that amount to \$10M for just one year, effectively disallowing the expansion of the program.
- Cultural Districts are a smart investment in California people and places. They increase economic vitality and strengthen communities, enhancing regional development while creating a multiplier effect for other industries.
- Unlike other improvement districts, Cultural Districts lack a dedicated funding mechanism beyond a state allocation.

Add your insights or impact story: *Why are cultural districts important? Or what would dedicated funding help make happen in your community?*

The Cultural Districts Ask:

- Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas has submitted a budget request letter, asking the Governor to restore the \$5M in funding in the 2025-26 budget. Will you support restoring \$5M to the California Cultural Districts Program in 2025-26?

Restore \$27.9M to Museum Grant Program

Background points:

- The Museum Grant Program was established in 2002 as part of the California Cultural and Historical Endowment (CCHE) at the California Natural Resources Agency.
- More than 1,500 museums in California serve over 22 million visitors per year- including art and natural history museums, historical societies, science and technology centers, botanical gardens, zoos, children's museums, aquariums, and cultural centers.
- CA museums serve as economic and social anchors in local communities, promote the understanding of California's diverse people and history and provide ethical stewardship of the state's art, sensitive artifacts and stories.
- The \$27.9M grant program was completely defunded in the final 24-25 budget, despite 148 museums across the state having applied for the funds.
- Federal funding for California museums is also under direct threat from a recent executive order declaring the elimination of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Add your insights or impact story: *Why is funding for the CA Museums important to you or your community? Or share a story about how a person or community was impacted by a museum.*

The Ask:

- Museums and cultural institutions are eligible for grant funding from the Proposition 4 Climate Bond. However, the Governor's budget has not yet allocated funds to any state granting entity. Would you ensure that Prop 4 funding is made available in 2025 to an entity/department that is authorized to manage grants to museums and cultural institutions?

Policy Priorities - Creative Economy Legislation

Support [SB 456](#) (Ashby) – Community Beautification Act

Background points:

- Under California Business and Professions Code, muralists qualify as “contractors” and must carry a commercial license to undertake a mural for more than \$500.
- Obtaining a contractor’s license is unnecessary and burdensome for muralists, requiring them to accumulate specialized experience in unrelated skills and pay expensive licensing fees.
- In order to comply, cities across the state have halted the implementation of mural projects – costing artists jobs and creating roadblocks for beautification initiatives like the State’s Clean CA Program.
- Authored by Senator Angelique Ashby and sponsored by CA Arts Advocates and the League of California Cities, SB 456 creates a licensing exemption for muralists, allowing them to continue to engage in public and privately commissioned work.

Add your insights or impact story: *Why are murals important to you or your community? Or how are artists impacted by this regulation?*

The Ask: Will you support SB 456 to save arts jobs and California murals?

We recommend supporting the bills below and are working with coalition partners on amendments to increase their effectiveness for the arts community.

Support [AB-1349](#) (Bryan) - Fairness in ticketing for artists and consumers

Background points:

- The rise of predatory ticketing practices – including the use of automated purchasing software, speculative ticket sales and deceptive marketing – are unfairly impacting California venues, artists and audiences.
- For example, fans are often led to secondary market sites that look like the venue or original seller, but have actually scooped up a large supply of tickets and are selling them for significantly more than face value.
- AB 1349 would prohibit a ticket reseller from using deceptive website displays and it would require that resellers disclose when they are selling a resale ticket as well as the price of the original ticket.
- AB 1349 also bans speculative ticketing – which involves listing tickets for sale before they’ve been acquired by the seller. While other states have banned the practice, it is currently and embarrassingly legal in California.

Add your insights or impact story: *How has unfair ticketing practices impacted you?*

The Ask: Will you support AB 1349 and fight for our fans' protection, our artists' welfare, and the integrity of independent venues in California?

Support [SB 630](#) (Allen) and [AB 1138](#) (Zbur, Bryan) - Film tax credits

Background points:

- Keeping film and television production in California is essential to its identity and economy.
- SB 630 and AB 1138 update state regulations to align with the Governor's proposal to raise the tax credit rate and remove the \$100M production budget cap to attract big budget projects.
- The bills also expand eligibility to more types of productions, such as smaller indie films and niche streaming series.
- Television series that provide stable, recurring employment for CA cast and crew could receive additional tax credit boosts with each season.

Add your insights or impact story: *Why is keeping film and TV production in California important to you?*

The Ask: Will you support SB 630/AB 1138 to expand and modernize California's Film & Television Tax Credit Program?

Support [AB 507](#) (Haney) - Streamlining adaptive reuse

Background points:

- California arts workers identified access to affordable housing and/or workspace as one of their greatest challenges, forcing some to change or abandon creative practices, or to relocate to other communities—even out of the state.
- Adaptive reuse of existing buildings can be one of the more affordable ways that artists' housing or live-work opportunities can be produced.
- AB 507 establishes guidelines and incentives for local governments to streamline the approval process for adaptive reuse development projects.
- It also authorizes local governments to establish adaptive reuse investment incentive programs to help fund eligible projects.

Add your insights or impact story: *How is housing or space affordability affecting you or your community?*

The Ask: Will you support AB 507 to spur creative solutions to CA's housing crisis?

Policy Priorities - Nonprofit Legislation

Support [AB 265](#) (Caloza) - Small business recovery fund that includes nonprofits

Background points:

- Weather extremes and natural disasters continue to impact California, small businesses and nonprofits.
- AB 265 establishes a \$100 million Small Business Recovery Fund that will provide competitive grants to small businesses and nonprofit organizations that are directly impacted by a state of emergency proclaimed by the Governor.

Add your insights or impact story: *How would this fund impact you? Or why is it important that nonprofits are included in business relief programs?*

The Ask: Will you support CA resiliency by providing recovery funds to nonprofits and small businesses through AB 265?

Support [AB 880](#) (Bennett, Limón, Umberg) - Improve State grants and contracting

Background points:

- AB 880 updates existing law by removing a long-standing exemption in the state's Prompt Payment Act and requiring timely payments for services provided to the state by nonprofits.
- AB 880 also improves the coverage of nonprofits' indirect costs, allowing reimbursement rates to be consistent with the federal government's approach.
- CalNonprofits says AB 880 "incentivizes the state to make timely payments" and aligning state reimbursement rates and processes with those of the federal government will "simplify paperwork and accounting for the state and nonprofits."

Add your insights or impact story: *How would your organization be impacted by this update?*

The Ask: Will you support AB 880 to update state law to require prompt payments to CA nonprofits?

Support [AB 1039](#) (Hart) - Advance payments for State funded grants

Background points:

- AB 1039 updates the state's existing advance payment practices by requiring all new state agency grants and contracts to provide advance payment to nonprofits beginning Jan. 1, 2026.
- The bill also requires state agencies to inform whether advance pay is available and at what rate in any notices about grants and contracts.
- CalNonprofits sponsors AB 1039 because "nonprofits need contracting terms that set us up to partner effectively" and because better advance pay provisions "enable nonprofits to better collaborate with the state."

Add your insights or impact story: *How would being eligible for advance payment impact your organization?*

The Ask: Will you support AB 1039 to improve partnerships between CA nonprofits and the state?

Topics to Socialize: Educate Lawmakers

1. Select topics from the list below that are familiar and important to you.
2. Use or develop your own Background points
3. Include an Impact point - why is the topic important to you or your community?
4. Craft your Ask: "Would you support funding this in the future?" or "Can I follow up with you with more information?"

Restore Investments in Arts Jobs

Background points:

- Innovative programs like [choose from below] provide arts jobs while lighting the way towards a future for our state that integrates arts and culture into solving civic issues, fostering social cohesion, revitalizing neighborhoods and ensuring access to the tools of creative expression for all.
- **CA Creative Corps**
 - ◆ A one-time \$60 million investment in arts-driven solutions to civic engagement, public health awareness, social justice and climate resiliencies.
 - ◆ Implemented in 2023-24, CA Creative Corps is the nation's largest "arts jobs" program, employing 7,000 arts workers –larger than the WPA at its height of 5,000 jobs
 - ◆ [Your impact talking point]
- **Performing Arts Equitable Payroll Fund (SB 1116)**
 - ◆ A years-in-the-making program to help CA's small performing arts organizations address the impacts of changes to employment law and COVID shut downs.
 - ◆ Received \$12.5 million one-time funding in 2024-25
 - ◆ The California Office of Small Business Advocates, the agency administering the program, reports that "due to the overwhelming response and the limited funds available", the program stopped accepting applications after just 10 days.
 - ◆ [Your impact talking point - PLEASE NOTE: 25% of the legislature is new! Educating everyone will be essential to asking for PAEPF funding next budget cycle.]
- **Arts in the Parks**
 - ◆ A multiyear initiative through California State Parks that funded the creation of art installations in parks.
 - ◆ Provided jobs for artists, culture bearers and California Native American tribes
 - ◆ \$11m in funding was clawed back in the 2024-25 budget from the 2022-23 \$25m allocation.
 - ◆ [Your impact talking point]

The Ask: Would you support restoring an investment in [program name] to sustain arts jobs while addressing some of the state's most critical challenges and highest goals?

Address Need For Policy Innovations for Artists and Gig Workers

Background points:

- Many California arts workers are struggling to access capital to sustain their practices, grow their businesses and even maintain a foothold in their communities.
- We know that artists, the lifeblood of CA's creative economy, are being displaced from their communities and even leaving the state. This undermines California's regional creative viability and risks the state losing a competitive edge that has been built up over generations.

Add your insights or impact story: How is housing or space affordability affecting you or your community?

Some Asks:

- **Support a future Hearing On Arts Workers and the state of CA Arts & Culture**
CA lawmakers have not held a hearing on the whole of the Creative Economy since 2021.
 - ◆ Many new factors are impacting the arts workers, including technology changes such as AI, the ongoing effects of the pandemic, the housing crisis and more.
 - ◆ We believe a hearing would help policymakers understand the impact of arts & culture contributions, the barriers arts workers face in the state and the conditions needed to support and sustain a thriving creative economy.
- **Support the development of a Guaranteed Basic Income program for arts workers or other innovations for the state's self-employed** - Create a pathway to economic security for artists in communities typically overlooked and underserved by traditional funding sources.
- **Include Artists in Affordable Housing Policies** - Many California artists qualify for affordable housing and face barriers in accessing safe and affordable workspaces.
 - ◆ At the same time, California communities are looking for ways to retain artists and deploy arts-based revitalization strategies to help local economies.
 - ◆ We need state-level solutions to address the needs of artist households and increase access to affordable, mixed-use living situations. The passage of AB 812, in conjunction with CA Cultural Districts, is one example.

Advance State innovations in integrating Arts & Health

Background points:

- Artists are the state's "second responders" (SCR 40), creative expression can heal trauma and the arts can bring us together to support community mental health and well-being.
- Physical activity, nutrition, and regular participation in the arts is good for our health for our physical, mental, and social wellbeing. 20% of people who participate in the arts once a month are less likely to be depressed.
- Making art for just 45 minutes can reduce cortisol (stress hormone). About 9 in 10 Americans (86%) believe "arts and culture improve my community's quality of life and livability."
- Arts on Prescription (AoP) is an innovative program that can refer patients or clients to arts experiences as a non-medical and non-pharmaceutical approach to support overall health and wellbeing.

For more resources visit the CA for the Arts Arts + Health webpage:

caforthearts.org/arts-health-initiative.

Add your insights or impact story: *What are your experiences in how arts participation heals trauma or helps with mental health or community well being?*

Some Asks:

- Expand policies that establish access to the arts as an integral part of the healthcare system such as including arts participation as a health behavior associated with the social determinants of health.
- Prioritize and incentivize the creation of interagency collaborations (arts agencies, health departments, municipal divisions) through cross-sector initiatives for resource and knowledge sharing, paving the way for AoP programs to become integral to public health strategies and to positively transform communities.
- Increase funding to support non-profit arts and culture organizations that provide programs which contribute to community health.
- Support the development of an "Arts on Prescription" pilot program.

Lawmaker Insights

See if your Lawmaker is advancing legislation that we are supporting or tracking - and thank them!

Check here before your meetings to see what your lawmaker is working on. This section will stay live as we track and add bills that have the potential to help the creative community.

Lawmaker Name	Bills
Allen, Ben (Sen)	SB-630 - authored film tax credit bill; district includes the Palisades; author of the CA Creative Workforce Act (2021) and the resolution that established Arts, Culture & Creativity Month
Ashby, Angelique (Sen)	Author SB 456 - fixes regulations to Muralists are exempt from contractor licensing requirements
Bennet, Steve (Asm)	Chair of Assembly Resources Budget Committee - Museum and Arts in Parks Funding Author AB 880 - improves state contracting with nonprofits
Bonta, Mia (Asm)	Thank for AB 801 CA Community Reinvestment Act-establishes a state-level Community Reinvestment Act to ensure that state-chartered banks and fintech companies actively invest in underserved communities
Bryan, Isaac (Asm)	Thank for AB-1349 - authored fairness in ticketing bill Thank for AB 1165 CA Housing Justice Act- Commits the state to long-term, sustained investment in affordable housing solutions that match the scale of the crisis. This bill requires the development of comprehensive state financing plans and secures ongoing funding to meet the goal of building one million affordable homes by 2030, as pledged by Governor Newsom.
Cabaldon, Christopher (Sen)	Thank him for SB 417 - Housing Bond ACT - \$10B statewide bond to fund the construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable and permanent supportive housing
Caloza, Jessica (Asm)	Author AB 265 - disaster recovery fund that includes nonprofits
Haney, Matt (Asm)	Chair of Housing Committee; Author SB 507 - Adaptive reuse
Laird, John (Sen)	Author SB 456 - fixes regulations to Muralists are exempt from contractor licensing requirements
Smallwood Cuevas, Lola (Sen)	Made budget request to restore \$5m to California Art Council Made additional budget request to restore \$5m for California Cultural Districts
Ward, Chris (Asm)	Congratulate - Chair of Arts, Culture, Entertainment, Sports & Tourism Committee Made budget request to restore \$5M to California Art Council
Wicks, Buffy (asm)	Thank her for AB 736 - Housing Bond ACT - \$10B statewide bond to fund the construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable and permanent supportive housing