



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Vermont Arts Council and Vermont Humanities to Aid Arts and Humanities Organizations with COVID-19 Relief**

MONTPELIER, VT—Arts and humanities organizations in Vermont facing hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic can now apply for emergency relief funding through a new partnership between the Vermont Arts Council and Vermont Humanities.

The new COVID-19 Cultural Relief Grant Program is seeded with more than \$700,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020.

Grant awards are based on organization size:

- Annual operating budgets of up to \$200,000: \$5,000.
- Annual operating budgets between \$200,000 and \$750,000: \$7,500
- Annual operating budget larger than \$750,000: \$10,000

Awards may be made by the Vermont Arts Council, Vermont Humanities, or both. The grants do not require a match.

Applications will be evaluated based on demonstrated need rather than on a polished application. We seek to fund a diverse range of organizations of different disciplines, geographic locations, and backgrounds.

The CARES Act funding to the NEA and NEH was secured through the leadership efforts of Senator Patrick Leahy and Congressman Peter Welch.

“Our congressional delegation is a great champion for Vermont’s creative economy and cultural landscape,” said Vermont Humanities Executive Director Christopher Kaufman Ilstrup. “They know that Vermont’s artists and cultural workers are deeply embedded in and essential to our state’s fabric. We are proud to be working with them to help Vermont’s cultural sector weather this storm.”

Vermont's arts and culture sector provides more than 40,000 jobs annually and comprises 9.3% of all employment in Vermont, higher than the national average.

"How we respond to and recover from this public health crisis is critical," said Governor Phil Scott.

"It's a once-in-a-century event and the experience will endure with the people who lived through it. I want to thank Senator Leahy and the congressional delegation for remembering the organizations and the people who will tell the stories down the road," Scott added.

"Our theaters, libraries, museums and galleries are vital to Vermont's identity and essential to the future of so many of our towns," noted Vermont Arts Council Executive Director Karen Mittelman. "We know there will be a need for substantial additional support in the future, to enable Vermont's cultural organizations to re-open and help our communities to come back together."

Though applications will far exceed available funds, the Vermont Arts Council and Vermont Humanities are committed to continuing to work with Vermont's Congressional delegation to advocate for more funding.

Applications will be accepted until May 31 or until all available funds have been distributed. The application takes about 30 minutes to complete.

For full details and to apply for the grant, applicants can visit either the Vermont Arts Council application page at [www.vermontartscouncil.org/culturalrelief](http://www.vermontartscouncil.org/culturalrelief) or the Vermont Humanities application page at [www.vermonthumanities.org/c19-grants](http://www.vermonthumanities.org/c19-grants). For more information, email [vtcovidculturalrelief@gmail.com](mailto:vtcovidculturalrelief@gmail.com)

The Cultural Relief Grant Fund is one of several Vermont Arts Council and Vermont Humanities relief efforts aimed at strengthening the capacity of Vermont's arts and culture sector to survive the economic impact of COVID-19 and to help Vermont communities recover and heal in the months ahead.

### **About the Vermont Arts Council**

The Vermont Arts Council envisions a Vermont where all people have access to the arts and creativity in their lives, education, and communities. Engagement with the arts transforms individuals, connects us more deeply to each other, energizes the economy, and sustains the vibrant cultural landscape that makes Vermont a great place to live. Since 1965, the Council has been the state's primary provider of funding, advocacy, and information for the arts in Vermont. Learn more at [www.vermontartscouncil.org](http://www.vermontartscouncil.org)

### **About Vermont Humanities**

A statewide nonprofit organization founded in 1974, Vermont Humanities seeks to engage all Vermonters in the world of ideas, foster a culture of thoughtfulness, and inspire a lifelong love of reading and learning. Learn more at [www.vermonthumanities.org](http://www.vermonthumanities.org)

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