



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

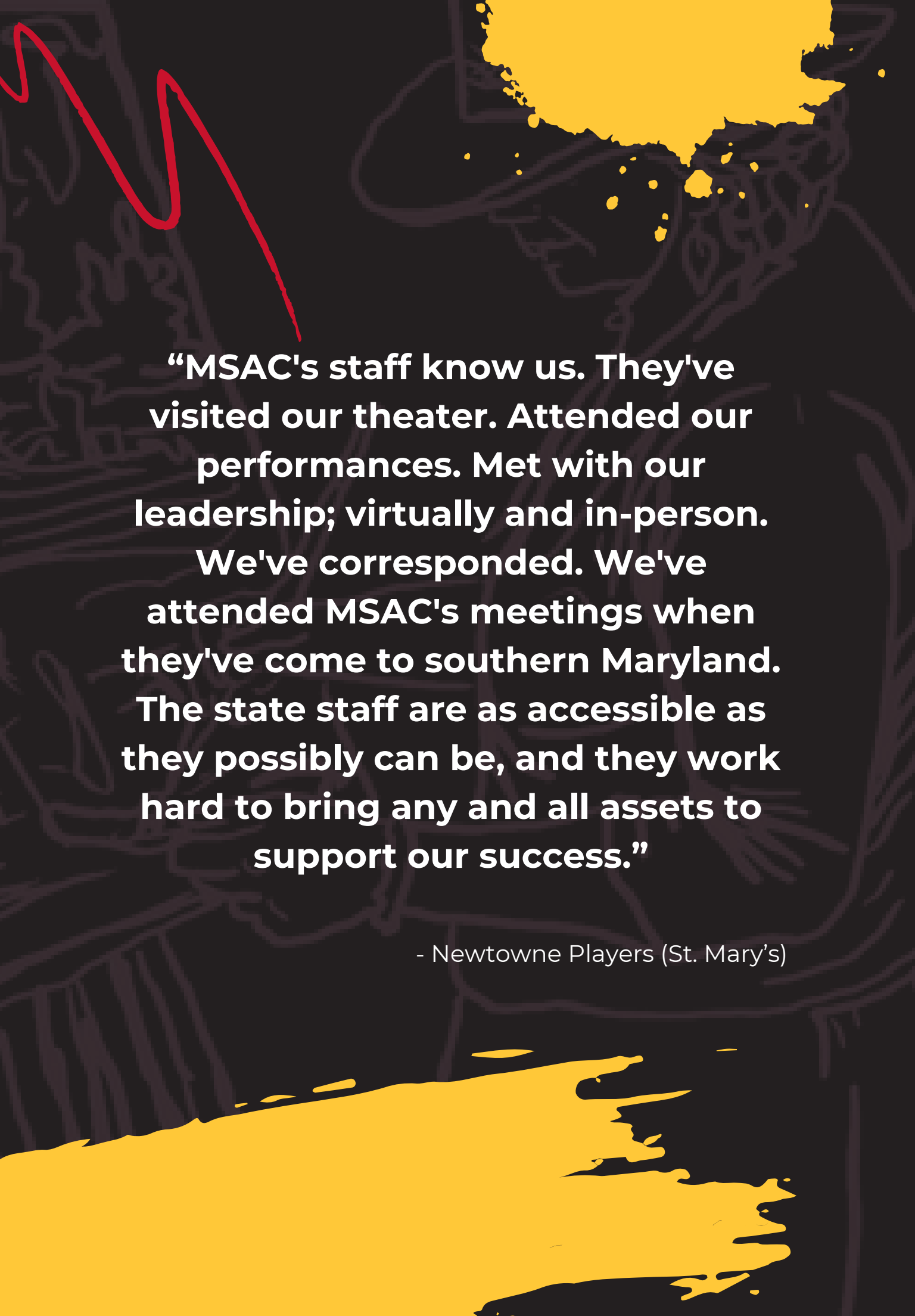
MSAC

maryland state arts council

Annual Report



FISCAL YEAR 2026



“MSAC's staff know us. They've visited our theater. Attended our performances. Met with our leadership; virtually and in-person. We've corresponded. We've attended MSAC's meetings when they've come to southern Maryland. The state staff are as accessible as they possibly can be, and they work hard to bring any and all assets to support our success.”

- Newtowne Players (St. Mary's)

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Fellow Marylanders:

As the Maryland Department of Commerce works to attract business investment and talent from all over the globe, we rely on the arts to help ensure that our state remains a top location for executives looking to relocate or grow their business. The arts help enrich lives and communities and maintain Maryland's reputation as an outstanding place to live.

Soon, I'll mark two years in my role as Secretary of Commerce. In my visits to each of Maryland's jurisdictions, the arts have been a consistent presence in every community. It's not just something you see in a mural or a sculpture; it's something you feel as you get to know the people of Maryland—and it's the result of strong collaboration. When arts businesses and entrepreneurs choose to call Maryland home, the Maryland State Arts Council is there to provide the support that accelerates their success.

In addition to quality of life, the arts also generate a sizable economic impact, and I'm pleased to report that the numbers continue to grow. Post-pandemic, MSAC's funding impact was valued at just under \$1 billion. Today, we've surpassed that mark, which means we've returned to pre-pandemic levels. This shows that an investment in the arts is an investment in jobs, business growth, and tourism.

Overall, the arts sector gives us one more story about what happens when no Marylander is left behind: everyone participates, and everyone benefits. I'm proud of MSAC's accomplishments and everything we have achieved in the past year. I'm looking forward to seeing the successes that are just around the corner.

Harry Coker, Jr.

Secretary, Department of Commerce



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MSAC's priority is to support the arts in Maryland. That's true in good times, hard times, and in times of uncertainty. We're providing this support today through the continuing execution of a strategic plan that assures access to state funding for everyone who adds to our state's creative landscape: the young studio artist building out their career, the emerging nonprofit preserving the cultural traditions of its community, and the large, legacy institution that's evolving to meet the needs of today's visitors.

A wide array of stakeholders contributes to these efforts. At MSAC, our dedicated councilors and talented staff make sure that grants and other resources remain reliable and easy to access. But we also look to those who are creating and supporting artistic work to help us direct our energy. And of course, it takes a statewide network of patrons, boosters, and volunteers to underscore that Maryland values the arts, from mountain to shore.

When all parts of this ecosystem work together, we achieve our priorities of raising the public awareness of MSAC and maintaining access to its services for all Marylanders.

We're glad to report that the mission moved steadily forward over the past year, which we remember as a season of change. While several new councilors joined us, we said a fond goodbye to others, including Carole Alexander, who rotated off the council after several decades of service as a Senate appointee. Every day, we're standing on the shoulders of former councilors like Carole, whose earlier contributions laid the groundwork that allows us to thrive today, as well as prepare ourselves to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

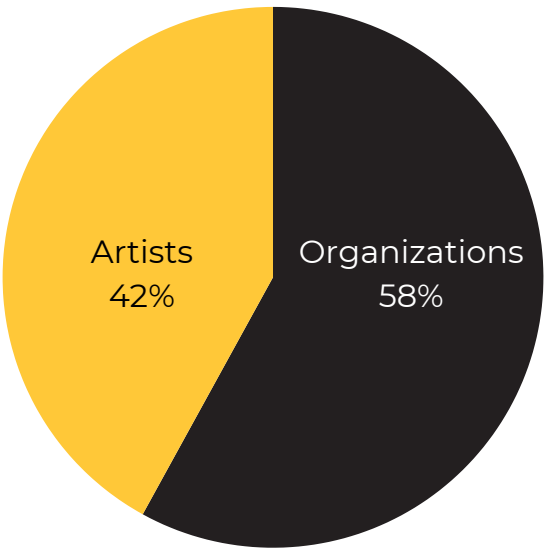
Paige Hernandez
Chair

Steven Skerritt-Davis
Executive Director

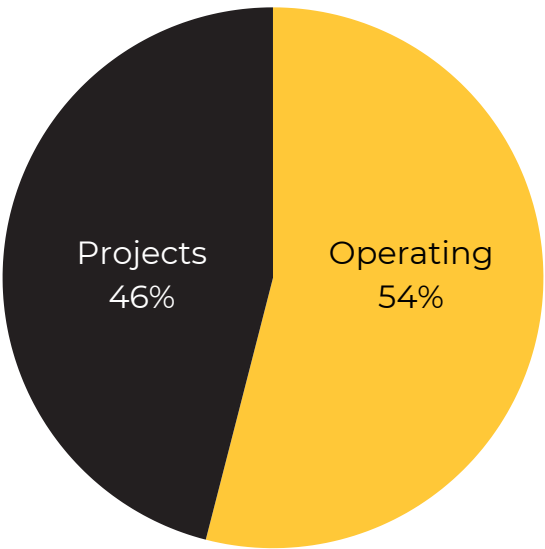


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The data below illustrates MSAC’s grantmaking activity in FY 2026.



Grantee Type



Grant Type

Applications received: **4,001**
Applications funded: **1,111**
Award rate: **27.8%**

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICTS



Guitar soloing in the Elkton Arts & Entertainment District in Cecil County.

***Spurring arts entrepreneurship
and economic development
through tax-related incentives***

\$468,000
26 grants

Supporting staffing and basic resources for A&E District management organizations, from community partnerships to local arts collectives.

.....

"One of the most meaningful outcomes of this funding was hearing directly from a local DJ who participated in the Hagerfest Music & Art Festival. After the event, he shared that in more than 20 years of living in Hagerstown, this was the first time he truly felt that his culture and artistic style were welcomed."

- Hagerstown A&E District (Washington)

ARTS CAPITAL

*Helping arts organizations
increase their impact through
capital projects*

\$3.6 million

9 grants

Grants help to improve or produce complete, usable, and accessible arts facilities across the state.



Ribbon-cutting at Willow Grove Cultural Commons, an Arts Capital-funded project at Sandy Spring Museum in Montgomery County.

ARTS IN EDUCATION



Teaching Artist Jamaal Collier presenting a program with students in Frederick County.

***Sparking arts education
experiences for learners of all ages***

\$719,031

154 grants

Grants connect teaching artists with learners in venues across the state, and the statewide poetry competition Poetry Out Loud engages students.

COUNTY ARTS DEVELOPMENT

*Ensuring a stable arts
infrastructure at the county level*

\$5.1 million
24 grants

This program provides funding and tailored assistance for the arts agencies serving as creative hubs in all 24 state jurisdictions.

Exterior of the Carroll Arts Center, home
of the Carroll County Arts Council.

CREATIVITY



A visual artist's studio in Prince George's County.

***Providing a foundation for
smaller arts organizations and
artists to thrive***

\$993,116
265 grants

Grants provide operating and project support for growing organizations and creative entrepreneurs as they add their talents to Maryland's vibrant arts sector.

.....

"This funding made it possible to dedicate time to artistic research, community engagement, and collaborative planning, all of which are essential for creating culturally authentic and sustainable arts programming.

- Travis Akeh, multidisciplinary artist (Allegany)

GRANTS FOR ARTISTS

Maintaining a strong artistic workforce and a vibrant creative economy

\$400,000

160 grants

Grants boost the careers of independent artists with broad support for working and living expenses.

.....

This grant has been incredibly helpful to jump start my career as an emergent artist. Last year when I soft-launched my business, I made very little money. This year, especially after the grant, I was able to participate in my first art fest, where I made a considerable amount of money."

- Kimberly De Jesus Alfonso, visual artist (Charles)



Sculptor and multidisciplinary artist David Friedheim in his Baltimore County studio.

GRANTS FOR ORGANIZATIONS



The Susquehanna Symphony Orchestra performing in Harford County.

***Ensuring the stability of
Maryland's arts sector***

\$18.5 million
304 grants

Grants bring sustaining operating funding to arts organizations making an impact in communities across the state.

.....

"This funding sustains not only public programming but also the essential, often invisible administrative infrastructure that allows it to happen."

- Arts Lab of South County (Anne Arundel)

MARYLAND TRADITIONS

*Creating opportunities for
Maryland's diverse cultures*

\$795,000

8	Folklife Network grants
15	Folklife Apprenticeship grants
6	Heritage Award grants

Grants provide operating support for regional folklife centers, project funding for traditional arts education, and recognition of long-term achievement in traditional arts.

Heritage Award winner and Piscataway Conoy Tribe elder Mario Harley, pictured in St. Mary's County.

PRESENTING & TOURING



Traditional Indian dance
in Wicomico County.

***Making connections between
performers and venues***

\$142,675

32 grants

Grants foster collaboration between
presenting organizations and artists touring
the state.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY



Panelists at an arts event in Montgomery County.

Building skills within Maryland's arts sector

\$138,373

74 grants

Grants help artists and arts professionals further their knowledge as they build their careers in Maryland.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Virtual and in-person sessions increase access to grants and help artists and organizations grow their creative businesses.

Offerings in FY 2026

	Virtual sessions	54
	Live sessions	14
	People served	2,566



Participants at an MSAC professional development event in Prince George’s County.

PUBLIC ART

*Integrating the arts into
Marylanders' everyday
experiences*

\$650,927

32 grants

(including two America250-funded projects)

14 commissions

Funding supports public art planning, creation, and conservation, as well as commissions in state-owned properties.

A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a white baseball cap and a grey tank top, is smiling and laughing while painting a mural. She is holding a paintbrush and a can of paint. The mural behind her features large, stylized flowers in shades of blue, pink, and purple. A ladder is visible on the left side of the frame.

Jaz Erenberg in front of her mural-in-progress, designed by the residents of Upper Fells Point, a neighborhood in Baltimore City.

FINANCIALS BY JURISDICTION

ALLEGANY

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
County Arts Development: \$197,018
Creativity: \$7,700
Folklife Network: \$82,500
Grants for Artists: \$5,000
Grants for Organizations: \$71,012
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$2,000
Total: \$383,230

ANNE ARUNDEL

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
Arts in Education: \$16,868
County Arts Development: \$239,541
Creativity: \$59,000
Folklife Apprenticeship: \$15,000
Grants for Artists: \$15,000
Grants for Organizations: \$1,241,756
Presenting and Touring: \$12,600
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$7,944
Public Art Across Maryland: \$58,000
Public Art (America250): \$15,000
Total: \$1,698,709

BALTIMORE CITY

A&E District Operating Support: \$72,000
Arts Capital: \$300,000
Arts in Education: \$69,383
County Arts Development: \$239,333
Creativity: \$277,588
Folklife Apprenticeship: \$20,000
Folklife Network: \$82,500
Grants for Artists: \$135,000
Grants for Organizations: \$8,109,268
Presenting and Touring: \$28,875
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$34,800
Public Art Across Maryland: \$281,882
Total: \$9,650,629

BALTIMORE COUNTY

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
Arts Capital: \$500,000
Arts in Education: \$48,239
County Arts Development: \$261,310
Creativity: \$110,100
Folklife Apprenticeship: \$5,000
Folklife Network: \$82,500
Grants for Artists: \$42,500
Grants for Organizations: \$366,928
Presenting and Touring: \$15,000
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$13,716
Public Art Across Maryland: \$10,000
Total: \$1,473,293

CALVERT

Arts in Education: \$15,000
Arts Capital: \$500,000
County Arts Development: \$199,035
Grants for Artists: \$2,500
Grants for Organizations: \$173,295
Total: \$889,830

CAROLINE

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
County Arts Development: \$194,172
Grants for Artists: \$2,500
Grants for Organizations: \$11,841
Public Art Across Maryland: \$30,000
Total: \$256,513

CARROLL

County Arts Development: \$205,584
Creativity: \$12,000
Folklife Apprenticeship: \$10,000
Folklife Network: \$82,500
Grants for Artists: \$5,000
Grants for Organizations: \$52,331
Public Art Across Maryland: \$30,000
Total: \$397,415

CECIL

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
Arts in Education: \$4,672
Arts Capital: \$500,000
County Arts Development: \$199,930
Creativity: \$8,000
Grants for Artists: \$2,500
Grants for Organizations: \$23,989
Presenting and Touring: \$4,000
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$2,000
Total: \$763,091

CHARLES

Arts in Education: \$868
County Arts Development: \$205,071
Creativity: \$20,000
Grants for Artists: \$2,500
Grants for Organizations: \$39,830
Heritage Awards: \$10,000
Total: \$278,269

DORCHESTER

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
Arts in Education: \$9,800
County Arts Development: \$194,109
Creativity: \$12,000
Grants for Artists: \$2,500
Grants for Organizations: \$23,767
Total: \$260,176



Decoy carvings ready for the water in Somerset County.

FREDERICK

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
Arts Capital: \$201,000
Arts in Education: \$35,415
County Arts Development: \$213,663
Creativity: \$59,200
Grants for Artists: \$12,500
Grants for Organizations: \$436,986
Presenting and Touring: \$17,500
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$6,000
Public Art Across Maryland: \$30,000
Total: \$1,030,264

GARRETT

A&E District Operating Support: \$36,000
County Arts Development: \$193,805
Creativity: \$4,000
Grants for Artists: 2,500
Grants for Organizations: \$16,588
Total: \$252,893

HARFORD

A&E District Operating Support: \$36,000
County Arts Development: \$194,629
Creativity: \$28,000
Grants for Artists: \$7,500
Grants for Organizations: \$200,746
Presenting and Touring: \$10,000
Total: \$476,875

HOWARD

Arts in Education: \$58,114
County Arts Development: \$218,618
Creativity: \$63,925
Grants for Artists: \$15,000
Grants for Organizations: \$374,208
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$14,000
Total: \$743,865

KENT

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
Arts in Education: \$5,200
County Arts Development: \$193,119
Grants for Artists: \$10,000
Grants for Organizations: \$115,997
Presenting and Touring: \$4,000
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$4,000
Total: \$350,316

MONTGOMERY

A&E District Operating Support: \$54,000
Arts Capital: \$450,000
Arts in Education: \$282,471
County Arts Development: \$278,276
Creativity: \$154,000
Folklife Apprenticeship: \$10,000
Folklife Network: \$82,500
Grants for Artists: \$62,500
Grants for Organizations: \$4,894,026
Heritage Awards: \$30,000
Presenting and Touring: \$35,700
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$22,720
Public Art Across Maryland: \$84,878
Total: \$6,441,071

PRINCE GEORGE'S

Arts Capital: \$359,000
Arts in Education: \$123,313
County Arts Development: \$270,521
Creativity: \$132,494
Folklife Apprenticeship: \$10,000
Grants for Artists: \$55,000
Grants for Organizations: \$1,238,172
Presenting and Touring: \$5,000
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$27,193
Public Art Across Maryland: \$20,000
Total: \$2,240,693

QUEEN ANNE'S

Arts in Education: \$13,841
County Arts Development: \$195,527
Creativity: \$4,000
Grants for Artists: \$2,500
Grants for Organizations: \$27,186
Presenting and Touring: \$5,000
Public Art Across Maryland: \$29,167
Total: \$277,221

ST. MARY'S

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
Arts in Education: \$5,920
County Arts Development: \$200,751
Creativity: \$11,109
Folklife Apprenticeship: \$5,000
Folklife Network: \$82,500
Grants for Artists: \$2,500
Grants for Organizations: \$9,993
Public Art Across Maryland: \$32,000
Total: \$367,773

SOMERSET

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
County Arts Development: \$193,563
Heritage Awards: \$10,000
Total: \$221,563

TALBOT

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
Arts Capital: \$500,000
Arts in Education: \$6,000
County Arts Development: \$194,518
Creativity: \$8,000
Folklife Network: \$82,500
Grants for Artists: \$2,500
Grants for Organizations: \$435,635
Heritage Awards: \$10,000
Presenting and Touring: \$5,000
Professional Dev. Opportunity: \$4,000
Public Art (America250): \$10,000
Total: \$1,276,153

WASHINGTON

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
Arts Capital: \$300,000
Arts in Education: \$6,000
County Arts Development: \$204,097
Creativity: \$10,000
Grants for Artists: \$5,000
Grants for Organizations: \$386,015
Public Art Across Maryland: \$10,000
Total: \$939,112

WICOMICO

A&E District Operating Support: \$18,000
Arts in Education: \$9,142
County Arts Development: \$199,919
Creativity: \$12,000
Folklife Network: \$82,500
Grants for Artists: \$2,500
Grants for Organizations: \$172,445
Public Art Across Maryland: \$10,000

Total: \$506,506

WORCESTER

A&E District Operating Support: \$36,000
Arts in Education: \$8,785
County Arts Development: \$195,739
Grants for Artists: \$5,000
Grants for Organizations: \$76,298

Total: \$321,822

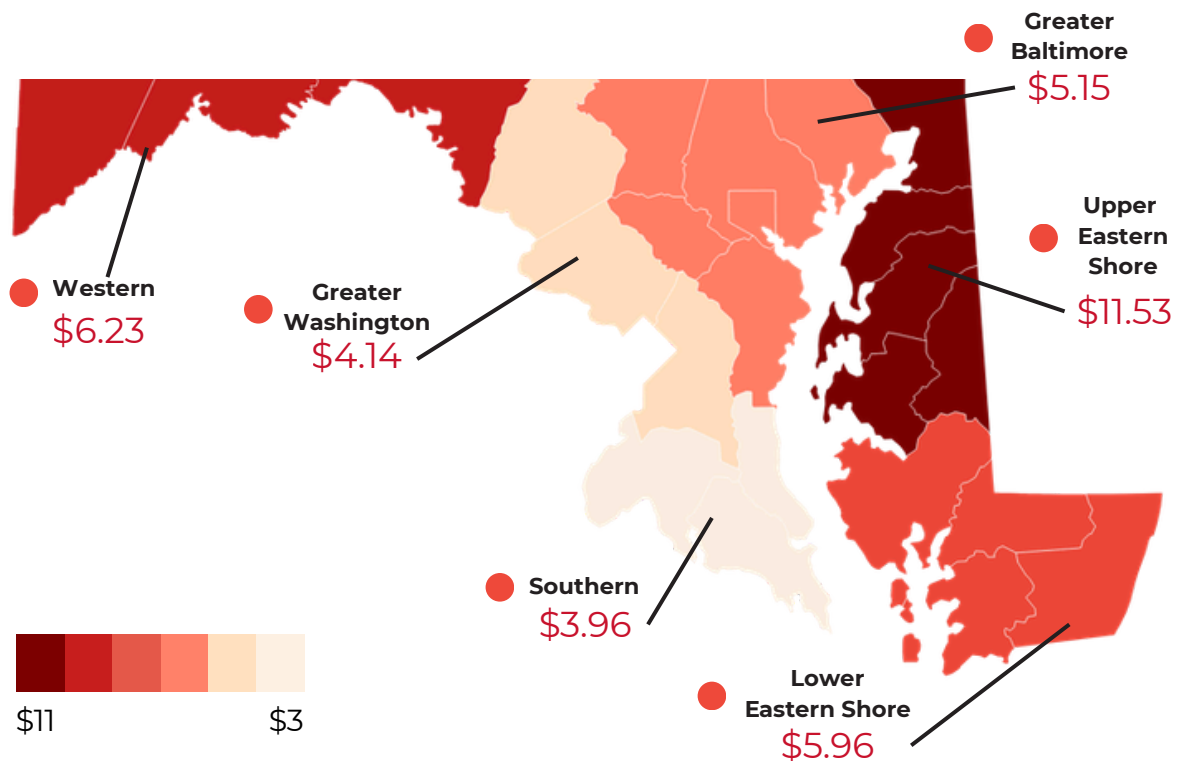
Figures reflect grants awarded in FY 2026 only.



Woodworking in progress in
Queen Anne's County.

FY 2026 GRANTS AWARDED

The map below illustrates MSAC's FY 2026 per capita funding, by region.



\$5.03 for every Marylander!

INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

INCOME

General funds: \$29,244,051

Special funds: \$1,725,000

Federal funds: \$1,048,738

Capital funds: \$3,000,000

Total income: \$35,017,789

EXPENDITURES

Grants For Organizations: \$18,498,312

County Arts Development: \$5,081,848

Arts Capital: \$3,000,000

Creativity: \$999,908

Arts in Education: \$718,972

Public Art Across Maryland: \$623,927

America250 Public Art: \$25,000

Folklife Network: \$660,000

A&E District Operating Support: \$468,000

Grants for Artists: \$400,000

Presenting and Touring: \$140,000

Professional Development Opportunity: \$130,000

Folklife Apprenticeship: \$75,000

Heritage Awards: \$60,000

Legislative Line Items: \$260,000

General administration: \$3,876,822

Total expenditures: \$35,011,362

*Amounts listed in this page reflect FY 2026 actual expenditures.
Amounts on previous pages reflect FY 2026 grants awarded.*

COUNCIL AND STAFF

COUNCIL

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“Grants always give a boost of confidence that your community cares and appreciates that you’re making art. Artists go for long periods of time with little or no evidence or acknowledgment that what they are doing matters. Thank you for the recognition. It’s very appreciated!”

- Karin Birch, visual artist (Frederick)



MARYLAND STATE ARTS COUNCIL

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*For more information on MSAC and programs,
please visit msac.org.*

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STATE OF MARYLAND

Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lieutenant Governor



Front cover: Traditional Appalachian fiddle tunes in Baltimore City.

Back cover: Public art at the riverside in Worcester County.