



MSAC Strategic Plan Implementation Updates - Dec. 2025

Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals:

Access: Bolster access to arts experiences and resources

Awareness: Amplify the stories of Maryland's arts sector and the value of public support

Connection: Foster networks within and beyond the arts sector

Equity: Cultivate a thriving arts ecosystem centered in equity

Leadership: Commit to a culture of care and innovation

[Click here](#) to view MSAC's current Strategic Plan

Communications

- Continued implementing revision plan, increasing Instagram content interactions by 331% and Facebook link clicks by 172%, and boosted the average Council Connect newsletter open rate to 55%, 19% higher than the industry average (Awareness)
- Integrated a voluntary email list opt-in question into all application forms, significantly increasing net sign-ups by more than 316%, and facilitating consistent communication to applicants regarding updates and future opportunities (Awareness)
- Continued use of documentation videos to highlight the work of grantees and awardees across programs; six new videos released (Awareness)

Grants & Programs

- Launched a revised and streamlined Grants for Organizations (GFO) application and updated requirements; applications increased by 39 organizations, totalling 344 (Access, Equity)
- Facilitated the 4th Annual Touring Roster showcase, highlighting 20 Touring Roster artists to presenters and venues from around the state (Access, Awareness, Connection)
- Communicated the closing of the general operating track of the Creativity grant program, and encouraged organizations to migrate to the streamlined GFO program, which now serves smaller-budget organizations (Equity)
- Implemented a policy that prioritizes educational engagements at Title I and Special Education schools, resulting in 23 out of 59 Arts in Education grants awarded in the first half of FY 2026 supporting activities at these schools (Access, Equity)
- Fostered closer connection with regional folklife centers by increasing the number of site visits to two per center in FY 2026, completing 11 visits between July and December 2025 (Connection, Leadership)
- Launched a County Arts Development Program revision process (Equity, Leadership)
- Dedicated five additions to the state's public art collection and advanced 10 active public art commissions for state-operated buildings and facilities; engaged user agencies in

conversation and decisions of how art benefits public access to non-art facilities (Access, Leadership, Connection)

- Launched the revised FY 2026-2028 Maryland Public Artist Roster, supporting an efficient and equitable artist selection process and promoting Maryland artists for opportunities in and out of our state (Awareness, Equity)

Professional Development

- Increased participation in professional development offerings by 35%, focusing on artist entrepreneurship and access to state resources (Access, Connection)
- Facilitated 16 MSAC program info sessions serving 594 constituents, representing a 9% attendance increase (Access, Awareness)
- Planned series of webinars on accessibility self-assessment and resources for arts organizations (Access, Equity)
- Restarted annual convenings for A&E District leadership across the state, providing tailored sessions to help managers maximize the benefits of their districts and tackle common challenges (Connection, Leadership)



MSAC Strategic Plan Implementation Updates - June 2025

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Administration

- Continued to improve onboarding procedures and training resources for new team members (Leadership)
- Targeted outreach within Commerce and to other State agencies, building relationships and collecting resources to share with constituents (Access, Awareness, Connection)

Communications

- Implemented procedure revisions raising the profile of MSAC resources (Access, Awareness)
- Expanded the use of documentation videos to highlight the work of grantees and awardees across programs; 10 videos released (Awareness)
- Revised social media posting format and strategy, leading to an increase in followers totalling 3.3K, a 102.9% increase on Instagram and 4,100% increase on Facebook (Access, Awareness)

Grants & Programs

- **Grants for Organizations:** Implemented year two of a five-year phase-in of the Equitable Funding Formula (Equity); Led a constituent-informed editing process to remove subjective influence on funding decisions (Equity, Leadership)
- **Creativity Grants:** Implemented new application options to better address and serve the needs of constituents (Access)
- **County Arts Development:** Fostered closer connection with county arts agencies by conducting site visits in lieu of written reports (Connection, Leadership)
- **Maryland Traditions:** Fostered closer connection with regional folklife centers by increasing number of site visits (Connection, Leadership)
- **Accessibility/Grant Procedures:** Revised procedures to accommodate alternative grant application formats - postal service mail, audio/video recording - as an accessibility accommodation (Access, Equity, Leadership)

- **Grant Procedures:** Revised grant guidelines template from a plain language perspective, now being utilized by all grant programs (Equity, Leadership)
- **Grant Procedures:** Added an additional panelist training aimed at mitigating bias in the review process, building connections between panelists, and increasing effectiveness of panelist scoring and discussions (Equity, Leadership)
- **Grant Procedures:** Synthesized data on application volume and award rates for public sharing and informing internal decisions such as budgeting (Equity, Leadership, Access)
- **Grant Procedures:** Analyzed distribution of grant funding across all counties and regions for transparency, to assess the effectiveness of equitable funding efforts, and to inform areas of improvement to underserved regions (Equity, Leadership, Access)
- **Grant Procedures:** Utilized new features of the grants management platform, SmartSimple, to improve constituent experience, create greater consistency between programs, and streamline backend procedures (Equity, Leadership)
- **Public Art Across Maryland Grants:** Increased site visits and personalized technical assistance to foster closer connection with artists and organizations across the state, resulting in increased geographic reach (Access, Connection, Equity, Leadership)
- **Maryland Public Art Initiative/MPAC:** Increased diversity of artists and procedural efficiency by utilizing the Maryland Public Artist Roster to select artists for state capital projects (Equity, Leadership)

Professional Development

- Implemented procedure revisions supporting clarity of purpose and data-driven decision-making in professional development offerings (Access, Connection)
- Focused on creative sector business development as a major content area (Access, Connection, Leadership)
- Continued to revise in-person office hours format to increase engagement (Access, Connection)
- Collaborated with the National Endowment for the Arts' Office of Accessibility to offer a webinar on the legal requirements and best practices on physical and programmatic accessibility for nonprofit organizations (Access, Equity, Leadership)
- Solidified and standardized virtual showcases for teaching and touring artist rosters to support artist employment (Awareness, Connection)

Other

- **Maryland Public Art Initiative/MPAC:** Nearly doubled the number of works in the State's collection by completing seven large-scale public art commission projects at five University campuses and one District Courthouse (Access, Leadership)
- **Maryland Public Art Initiative/MPAC:** Established a Committee on Collection Management to advise on collaborating with state agency partners towards the long-term care of the state's investment in public art (Connection, Leadership)
- **Arts Incubator Workgroup:** Provided staffing resources to produce a preliminary report that identified themes to explore how arts and cultural institutions can better support local artists (Access, Equity, Leadership)