

TEXAS COMMISSION ON THE ARTS

OVERVIEW

Created in 1965, the [Texas Commission on the Arts \(TCA\) was established](#) in order to accept federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts (Legislative Budget Board, 13). Over time, arts funding has increased steadily at the state level. Today, federal funding for the TCA is just [10.3 percent](#) of the TCA's overall budget with most of its budget coming from [general revenue](#) (House, I-1). In 2007, the Texas Sunset Commission found that the [TCA benefits the state](#) by providing economic stimulation for art programs and cultural tourism (LBB, 14). The TCA currently has a 14-person staff.

In its Legislative Appropriations Request, the TCA stated its goal is “[to advance our state economically and culturally by investing in a creative Texas](#)” (TCA 2014a, 1). Through grants, such as Arts Create and Arts Response Project, TCA provides funds for artists and organizations to advance a more “creative Texas.” For the 2016-2017 biennium, HB 1 dedicated \$15.6 million (88 percent of the TCA budget) toward these grants (84th Texas Legislature, I-1). An increase in funding this biennium is largely directed toward Cultural Tourism grants. Educating Texans about the arts, supporting art projects and events, and hiring performers are common aims for grants from TCA. TCA seeks to support a “[creative workforce](#)” and attract tourism (TCA 2014a, 2). TCA states that by supporting the arts, Texans’ creativity will improve and they will be more able to solve pressing problems. Furthermore, it states that it is “[prudent for Texas to invest](#)” in the arts (2).

The 79th Texas Legislature gave the TCA the responsibility of dividing the state into cultural districts. Cultural districts are determined by applications from various areas. There are 26 cultural districts currently, with three applications under consideration for 2015 (McMillan 2015). The San Angelo Cultural District encompasses 200 acres including the Fort Concho National Historic Landmark. This cultural district will help preserve local historic landmarks and encourage tourism into the district. Being granted a cultural district doesn't guarantee any direct funds, but it does give the cultural district benefits like using the state-approved logo. Cultural districts contain cultural resources that stimulate the economy and attract tourists. The goal of making these cultural districts is to boost the economies of cities and towns throughout Texas (TCA 2014c, 6-14). An example of a specific goal would be to preserve historic buildings with façade improvements in order to support local artists and improve property values (TCA 2012).

Over 3.6 million residents in Texas live in rural areas, one of the largest rural populations in the country. TCA allows rural community arts organizations, other non-profit organizations, and government organizations to apply for artists to perform in their communities. The [Texas Touring Roster](#) includes many artists willing to travel to these communities and perform for low costs (TCA 2010).

By Bill Peacock and Cody Ross

- The Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) was established in order to accept federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts.
- Today, federal funding for the TCA is just 10.3 percent of the TCA's overall budget with most of its budget coming from general revenue.
- TCA funding for 2016-17 is \$17.7 million, up 31.7 percent from 2014-15.
- The TCA says its “work in support of the creative industries assists in finding creative solutions to challenging problems.”



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continued

TEXAS COMMISSION ON THE ARTS FUNDING – 2008-09 to 2016-17

Biennium	2008-09	2010-11	2012-13	2014-15	2016-17
Funding	\$10,621,962	\$14,846,584	\$7,841,544	\$13,411,716	\$17,669,227

2016-17 APPROPRIATIONS BY STRATEGY

A.1.1.	Arts organization grant	\$7,811,664
A.1.2.	Arts education grants	\$2,130,970
A.1.3.	Cultural tourism grants	\$5,670,000
A.1.4.	Direct administration of grant	\$1,079,552
B.1.1.	Central Administration	\$739,483
B.1.2.	Information Resources	\$237,558

2016-17 SOURCE OF FUNDS

SOURCE	AMOUNT	PERCENT
GR Funds	\$14,134,305	80.0%
GR Dedicated (Account No. 334)	\$907,122	5.1%
Federal Funds	\$1,823,800	10.3%
Appropriated Receipts	\$304,000	1.7%
License Plates	\$500,000	2.8%

TCA PROGRAMS

Both Arts Create and Arts Respond are programs designed to support art organizations for multiple years at a time. Combined, they received over 5 million dollars in 2014 as the two largest categories of grants. An evaluation panel of the TCA evaluates grants based on applications but they do not decide on dollar amounts. The commission ultimately decides on funding amounts for the grants based on recommendations from the evaluations panel. Arts Create grants are designated to operational costs for establishing art organizations and cannot be given toward specific programs in those organizations. This program also directs funds to local communities. Arts Respond grants are designed for “[project assistance](#)” and administrative costs related to those projects (TCA 2014a, 3). There are 5 areas that Arts Respond grants can be designated toward: Education, Health & Human Services, Economic Development, Public Safety & Criminal Justice, and Natural Resources & Agriculture. Each area has criteria for prospective grants (4).

ARTS CREATE

Under the Arts Create program, there are six different grants that arts organizations are eligible to apply for. Each of the five grants are defined by the amount of funds the applying organization has (with exception to Arts Create subgrants). For example, “[Arts Create-1](#)” can only be applied for by organizations with funds between \$50,000 and \$1 million. Arts Create subgrants must go toward local arts agencies or government local arts agencies. Funding amounts are determined by population of the community the organization is serving. The intent of each grant is the same—“To advance the creative economy of Texas by investing in arts organizations” (TCA 2014b). These grants can only be given to arts organizations and not toward specific programs or projects.

ARTS RESPOND

In contrast to Arts Create, Arts Respond only has two different categories: Performance Support and Projects. Both grants require that the funds be matched for every dollar. Performance Support gives funds to non-profits, schools, colleges, and units of government for artist fees. These grants can only be given quarterly with a maximum of \$12,000 per year. Only artists from the [TCA Touring Roster](#) are eligible to perform under a Performance Support grant. Bands, such as Asleep at



the Wheel, and performers, such as Great Promise for American Indians are included in the roster. Each artist or group charges different amounts, ranging from a few hundred dollars to tens of thousands. For example, Russian Speakers Society of Austin received an Arts Respond Performance Support grant for [\\$1260](#) in order to have the Flying Balalaika Brothers to perform in Austin (TCA 2015a). Project grants are given to arts organizations, rural art providers, and TCA cultural districts (districts designated by the TCA according to their cultural tourism needs). Project grants can only be given if one or more of the following categories are met: Education, Health & Human Services, Economic Development, Public Safety & Criminal Justice, and Natural Resources & Agriculture. Each category has criteria in order for the grant to apply. Education Projects must promote innovations in K-12 education and be during school or in a school setting. The Amarillo Art Institute received an Arts Respond Project grant for [\\$1000](#) in order to support free afterschool programs which included art classes for disadvantaged youth (TCA 2015a). Health & Human Services Projects must improve human health or functioning. These grants often occur in a hospital, clinic, senior activity center, women’s shelter, or homeless shelter. Economic Development Projects must diversify local economies, generate revenue, and attract visitors and investment. These grants are designed to support job growth and cultural tourism. Public Safety & Criminal Justice Projects are intended to prevent juvenile delinquency. Natural Resources & Agriculture Projects are designed to improve the environment specifically in rural areas through art (TCA 2014b).

YOUNG MASTERS

TCA’s budget is primarily focused on Arts Create and Arts Respond grants, but Young Masters is another smaller program they offer. It is focused on helping young artists advance their studies in the arts. Grants can be given up to two years and are [\\$2,500](#) per year for each student. Eligible students must be between 8th and 11th grade and be legal US and Texas residents. These grants are not college scholarships, as funding for them ends after the student completes 12th grade. These grants are intended to invest in the future of the arts through aspiring young artists (TCA 2014b). ★

FY 2014 PROGRAM FUNDING		
Strategy	Arts Create	Arts Respond
A.1.1. Arts Organization	\$2,664,000	\$957,794
A.1.2. Arts Education	\$276,287	\$589,699
A.1.3. Cultural Tourism	\$422,000	\$187,483
TOTAL	\$3,362,287	\$1,734,976



REFERENCES

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Prior to joining the Foundation, Peacock served as the Deputy Commissioner for Coastal Resources for Commissioner Jerry Patterson at the Texas General Land Office. Before he worked at the GLO, he was a legislative and media consultant, working with groups like Citizens for a Sound Economy and Putting Children First. Peacock also served as the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental Affairs for Commissioner Rick Perry at the Texas Dept. of Agriculture, as a legislative aide to Rep. John Culberson in the Texas House of Representatives, and as an analyst for the Texas Senate Committee on Education.

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