

Mississippi Arts Commission

Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2026 to 2030

1. Mission Statement

The Mississippi Arts Commission's (MAC) mission is to foster creativity that enhances the quality of life in Mississippi communities through statewide investment in the arts. MAC provides grants and technical assistance to arts organizations, non-profit organizations and local government entities that are engaged in arts programming. The agency also supports individual artists through grants and services. MAC also sponsors special initiatives that work to increase the arts in K-12 education, assist local communities with using the arts as a tool for development, and promote awareness of the state's rich artistic heritage.

2. Agency Philosophy

MAC's work is guided by its vision statement: Mississippi's cultural and artistic excellence forms the foundation of a creative and prosperous future.

3. Relevant Statewide Goals and Benchmarks

In reviewing *Building a Better Mississippi*, the state of Mississippi's strategic plan, MAC's work most strongly connects to the goals for public education and economic development. The agency's efforts do not tie directly to the outcomes listed within the state plan, but MAC works to improve K-12 education through its grants to schools and special initiatives, including the Mississippi Whole Schools and Poetry Out Loud programs. These efforts focus on increasing student achievement and improving the quality of the learning environment. Related to economic development, MAC encourages communities to develop their cultural assets with the assistance of MAC's Arts-Based Community Development program.

4. Overview of Agency 5-Year Strategic Plan

MAC conducts an extensive feedback process every five years to gather information for its strategic plan. The agency most recently completed this process in 2022-23. MAC sought feedback on its programs and future direction from constituents, policy makers, and the public. The agency utilized multiple methods to gather feedback, including an online survey, public meetings, roundtable discussions with different constituent groups, and one-on-one interviews.

MAC used this feedback to devise a plan that is guiding the agency's work from 2023 through the end of 2027. The plan includes goals that are specific to the agency's work. There is also a year-to-year workplan that agency staff will use for benchmarks to note progress and areas that need more work. This plan is available on the agency website:
<https://arts.ms.gov/who-we-are/mission-and-strategicplan/>

5. Agency Internal/External Assessments

5.0 - External & Internal Factors that would influence MAC's ability to achieve its goals:

External Factors:

- Changes in federal funding (from the National Endowment of the Arts)
- Changes in reporting requirements for the agency's federal grant
- Changes to state-level arts education curriculum framework
- Large-scale staff turnover in arts organizations and MAC partnering organizations around the state

Internal Factors:

- Changes in staff which may require training or re-focusing an initiative
- Changes in agency direction as determined by MAC's Board of Commissioners

MAC is required to submit an annual report to the National Endowment for the Arts as part of the agency's grant. As part of the grant agreement, the NEA's Inspector General may conduct an audit of our grant spending.

5.1 – Internal Management Systems Used to Evaluate Performance

Management Policies in Place

- MAC's Program staff are designated as the primary contacts with grantees. They spend extensive time assisting them.
- MAC tracks the success of initiatives through internal goal-setting and ongoing meetings between the Executive Director and staff.

Operational and Tracking Procedures

- MAC tracks the work of its grantees through required reporting as well as regular site visits to grantees by MAC staff.
- The agency requests feedback from non-grant program participants to determine the success of events and to create a list of suggestions for future programs.

- The agency tracks extensive data on the awarded grants for required federal reporting and to determine future needs.

Organizational Structure

- Supervisors meet with their employees on a regular basis to gather information on success of ongoing work.
- The agency's Board of Commissioners review the staff's work on a quarterly basis and provide feedback on MAC's programs from a community member's perspective.

6. Agency Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Measures by Program for FY 2026-30

Program 1 – Grants

Goal A: Increase the number and quality of art activities throughout Mississippi by providing grants to non-profit organizations, local governmental entities, and individual artists (Miss. Code Ann. § 39-11-7).

Objective A.1. Support high quality arts organizations and arts activities presented by non-profits or governmental entities.

Outcome: Increase the percentage of grants awarded to organizations by 1%

Strategy A.1.1. Expand the capacity of organizations that present arts programming.

Output: Number of grants awarded to non-profit organizations and units of local government

Efficiency: Percentage of total grant budget awarded to non-profit organizations and units of local government

Objective A.2. Support the development of professional-level artists in Mississippi through grant programs for individual artists.

Outcome: Increase the percentage of applications received from first-time artist applicants by 2%

Strategy A.2.1. Expand the capacity and development of high-quality professional artists through grant programs.

Output: Number of grants awarded to individual artists

Objective A.3. Increase the access to MAC grant programs and the quality of applications submitted to the agency.

Outcome: Increase by 2% the overall number of grant applications received by the agency.

Outcome: Increase by 3% the percentage of Mississippi counties reached by MAC grants.

Strategy A.3.1. MAC tracks the number of communities and individuals it serves through grants to strategize for recruitment.

Output: Number of individuals served by grants

Output: Number of children under 18 served by grants

Output: Number of counties where grants were awarded

Strategy A.3.2. MAC provides ongoing support to applicants and grantees through consultations and site visits.

Output: Number of site visits made by staff

Output: Number of consultations offered by staff

Strategy A.3.3. The agency updates the grant systems to allow for easier use by applicants.

Output: Total of grant funds awarded

Program 2 – Information and Technical Services

Goal A: Encourage and deepen the utilization of the arts in Mississippi's K-12 schools (Miss. Code Ann. § 39-11-7).

Objective A.1. Increase the utilization of the arts in K-12 schools through a range of ongoing programs.

Outcome: Increase by 2% the percentage of new schools participating in non-grant MAC Arts Education activities.

Strategy A.1.1. Train teachers on the integration of the arts in school curriculum through the Whole Schools (WS) program.

Output: Number of students, teachers and administrators participating in the WS

Goal B: Build awareness of Mississippi's distinctive artistic heritage, the contributions of contemporary Mississippi-based artists and the programs of the Arts Commission. (Miss. Code Ann. § 39-11-7).

Objective B.1. Increasing awareness of Mississippi’s artistic heritage, contemporary artists, and the Arts Commission through a range of ongoing programs.

Outcome: Increase by 2% the percentage of Mississippi residents who are knowledgeable about Mississippi’s artistic contributions. *Note:* Tracking outcomes for this objective will be difficult because the agency is working on increasing the overall awareness of the arts among the general public.

Strategy B.1.1. Produce the annual Governor’s Arts Awards program.

Output: The number of attendees at the ceremony

Strategy B.1.2. Collaborate with Mississippi Public Broadcasting on the production of “Mississippi Arts Hour,” a weekly arts interview radio show.

Output: The (estimated) number of listeners to the show

Strategy B.1.3. Publicize the work of the Arts Commission through the agency’s Communications Office.

Output: Number of page views on the Arts Commission website

Output: Total reach of the agency’s social media presence

Goal C: Increase the professional capacity of Mississippians working within the creative sector through non-grant activities (Miss. Code Ann. § 39-11-7).

Objective C.1. Offer a range of professional development opportunities for individual artists and people who work for arts and cultural organizations.

Outcome: Increase by 3% the percentage of participants who are regularly participating in MAC programs

Strategy C.1.1. Present a series of events that offer professional development and networking opportunities for individual artists.

Output: Number of participants in attendance at professional development events