Everyone in Massachusetts has the right to experience creativity and culture, express themselves creatively, and see their culture reflected in artistic expression. This is not possible without equitable and adequate public funding of art, culture, and creativity.

Public investment in the arts is the foundation for a healthy economy

- Massachusetts arts nonprofits support more than 73,000 full-time jobs, generate over $2.2B in total spending, and bring in nearly $100M in state tax revenues.¹
- Every $1 awarded by the Mass Cultural Council is leveraged for an additional $102 by grantees.²

Public investment in the arts ensures public access to creative expression and cultural experiences

- Arts event admission prices only cover 30% of costs, while the remainder is funded by corporate, foundation, and individual giving along with public grants.³
- Corporate giving is often driven by marketing goals and focuses on blockbuster arts events or other highly commercialized activities, while individual philanthropists are often motivated by personal goals. Private foundation support is highly concentrated with nearly half (46.4%) of all foundation giving going to a fraction of all recipients (2.1%).⁴ This results in narrow programming that limits the breadth and depth of representation and participation from all our communities.
- The Mass Cultural Council awards grants to local cultural councils in all 351 cities and towns in the state. 53% of the money granted serves regions with high rates of poverty.² The organization also gives over 6,000 grants annually to working artists, cultural institutions, community groups, and youth programs that are otherwise not served by private funders.
Public investment in the arts creates connections across cultural divides

- Participants in community-based arts programs experience greater connection with their community. In FY18, Mass Cultural Council grantees organized public programs attended by more than 20 million people.

- The Mass Cultural Council supports 45 cultural districts across the state. These intentional cultural districts reduce poverty and build bridges across neighborhood, ethnic, and class divides in ways that other efforts at civic engagement cannot.

- Social science research repeatedly shows that opportunities for cultural engagement and creative expression are just as integral to social well-being as adequate food, housing, income, and the opportunity to pursue meaningful activities.

- Sharing creative experiences and expressing our creativity build powerful connections with the people we’re closest to, our community, and the world around us.

Public investment in the arts elevates historically marginalized and ignored voices

- The traditions, history, and heritage that link us to our past and to each other are crucial to our well-being but are often ignored. The Mass Cultural Council assesses the Commonwealth’s needs for historic and cultural preservation and organizes efforts to ensure that those needs are met.

- People with disabilities compose nearly 12% of the adult population but only 7% of those attending arts events. The Mass Cultural Council’s Universal Design Initiative funds arts organizations that recognize the power of design to accommodate patrons, staff, volunteers, and students.

- Historic social forces disadvantage women, immigrants, people of color, LGBT people, people with disabilities, and other oppressed groups. Public funding supports creative projects by and about these communities. These projects can impact public opinion about these groups and open the door to legislative change that increases equity and inclusion.