

## December 2025 Arts Update Newsletter



*We wish everyone a wonderful and safe holiday season.*

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Here is what we have included for you in this month's newsletter:

- Arts and Culture Day 2026 - Registration Details
- Advocacy at the State and Federal Level
- Nebraska Arts Action Center
- Giving Tuesday - December 2
- Grant Opportunities
- America 250 Celebrations
- Join Nebraskans for the Arts Today!

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## Arts and Culture Day at the State Capitol

**NEBRASKANS FOR THE ARTS**

**NEBRASKA ARTS ACTION FUND**

I ♥ THE ARTS  
NEBRASKANS FOR THE ARTS

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Arts and Culture Day**

Join us at the State Capitol, where artists, educators, and advocates come together to share our stories of the impact of arts and culture.

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2026**  
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2026**  
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
BONUS ARTS SESSIONS & PARTICIPANT RECEPTION

[www.nebraskansforthearts.org](http://www.nebraskansforthearts.org)

**Registration Opens Dec. 3, 2025**  
[Click here for more details](#)

Nebraskans for the Arts will host its annual **Arts and Culture Day** (formerly known as *Arts Advocacy Day*) on **February 4, 2026** with additional events scheduled for the late afternoon and evening of **Tuesday, February 3rd**.

We encourage everyone from across the state to come in on Tuesday afternoon. We will have a private tour for attendees at Assemblage Gallery, an interest session on arts funding, and an evening reception at Saro Cider. A hotel block of rooms will be available at the Hampton Inn in downtown Lincoln.

On Wednesday, we will spend the morning at the State Capitol networking, advocating, and participating in sessions featuring art galleries in Senators' offices, an America 250 Celebration Kick-off, and music performances in the Rotunda. The afternoon will include lunch and roundtable discussions on arts education standards, health and wellness, life-long learning in the arts, A.I. in the arts, and advocacy efforts.

## Why come to Arts and Culture Day?

### 🚩 **Show policymakers the REAL impact of the arts.**

Your presence puts a face to the value of the arts and culture in Nebraska. When lawmakers meet the people whose work drives education, economic development, community vitality, and cultural identity, the message carries far more weight than statistics alone.

### 🚩 **Influence decisions that directly affect funding and policy.**

State-level choices about funding for the arts and Creative Districts, education requirements, and cultural initiatives are being made right now. A day of advocacy is a rare opportunity to speak directly with senators and staff to ensure the arts remain a priority in legislation and budgets.

### 🚩 **Advocate for your community and make sure its voice is heard.**

Whether you're an educator, district leader, or working artist, you bring unique insights about how the arts enrich lives in every corner of Nebraska. Sharing local stories helps lawmakers understand the needs of both urban and rural creative ecosystems.

### 🚩 **Build statewide connections and strengthen the arts network.**

Arts and Culture Day brings together leaders from schools, organizations, cultural districts, and creative industries. This is a valuable opportunity to meet other advocates,

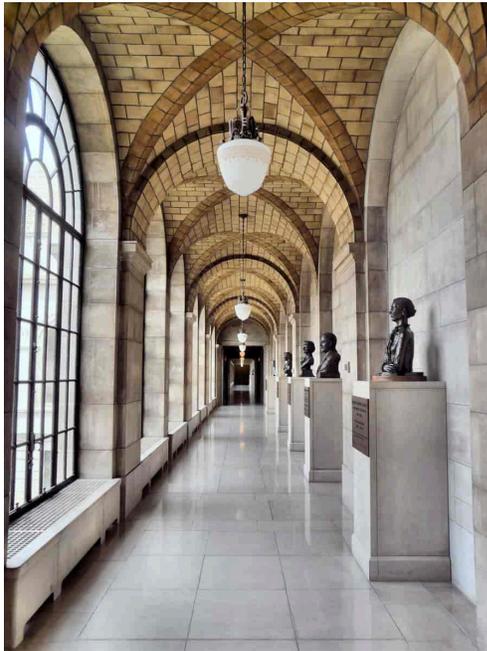
participate in professional development, exchange ideas, spark collaboration, and elevate a unified voice for the arts.

**🚩 Celebrate Nebraska's cultural heritage—America 250 celebrations.**

This year's event highlights Nebraska's role in the upcoming America 250 celebrations. Being part of this moment positions you at the heart of statewide cultural planning while honoring the artists and educators who shape Nebraska's story.

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## Advocacy at the State and Federal Level



### STATE ADVOCACY

The Nebraska Legislature will begin its short session on January 7, concluding on April 17. The 59th day is April 10, which means the majority of the work is to be done. The first 10 days are designated for bill introductions, but unless there are bills with zero fiscal notes, many issues will not be addressed.

The big focus will be the state budget, where currently there is a projected \$471 million shortfall. NFTA's advocacy efforts will be targeted to telling the stories and data of how arts and culture impact our state's economy, elevate the quality of living, and keep/attract people to stay in Nebraska.

### FEDERAL ADVOCACY

NFTA, along with Americans for the Arts, continues to monitor NEA, NEH, and IMLS funding and the status of Arts Education. There is an effort to downsize and eliminate the Department of Education, causing ripple effects in how education will be supported. We know this will directly impact arts education.

To end the government shutdown, a Continuing Resolution (CR) extended current FY25 appropriations to January 30, 2026. NFTA will be diligent in monitoring updates on FY26 Appropriations, and we will be asking for your help in contacting our elected officials in the next couple of months.



# Nebraska Arts Advocacy Network and Arts Action Center

NFTA and the Nebraska Arts Action Fund stay connected with both state and local organizations to stay informed and connected, including Americans for the Arts, Creative States Coalition, Mid-America Arts Alliance, Nonprofit Association of the Midlands, Civic Nebraska, and Nebraska Table. NFTA also adopted **Quorum** as our legislative tracking system and action center last year.

**We want you to be a part of our Nebraska Arts Advocacy Network.**

Stay informed about advocacy updates from NFTA and AFTA. We'll notify you immediately of updates and action alerts.

The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with 'NEBRASKANS FOR THE ARTS' logo and links for 'My Elected Officials', 'Issues', 'Take Action', 'Log an Interaction', 'Become a Member of NFTA', and 'Hello, Marty!'. The main content area features a 'Steps to being an Arts Advocate for Nebraska' section with a numbered list of six steps. To the right is a 'NFTA Advocacy Network Action Center Registration Form' with a red checkmark icon and a 'Write' button. Below this are 'FEDERAL UPDATES' with a photo of the Nebraska State Capitol, 'BREAKING NEWS UPDATES TIMELINE' provided by Americans for the Arts and Arts Action Fund, and 'READ CURRENT FEDERAL UPDATES (9/18/25)' provided by Creative States Coalition. On the right side, there are 'CURRENT ACTION ALERTS' including 'Support at least \$207 Million for the NEA and NEH Today!' with a '5 points' indicator and a 'Write' button, and 'SUPPORT ARTS EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS' with a '10 points' indicator and a 'SUBMIT' button.

**Learn More About Nebraska Arts  
Action Center**

The graphic features a blue background with colorful confetti. The word 'GIVE' is written in large, stylized letters with a dotted border, and 'DEC 2' is written below it in a similar style. Below the text, it says 'HELP SHAPE THE ARTS COMMUNITY SUPPORT NFTA!' and includes the 'NEBRASKANS FOR THE ARTS' logo. At the bottom, it says 'SHAREomaha.org' and '#GIVINGTUESDAY402 powered by SHARE Omaha'.

**Donate**

## Giving Tuesday

**Donate to NFTA on Share Omaha  
#GivingTuesday402**

Your support helps NFTA:

- Honor two Nebraska schools with the NebraskARTS Award. This award recognizes great support and achievement in arts education within their school.
- Support advocacy efforts at both the state and federal levels.
- Provide professional learning for artists and arts educators.
- Support an Arts and Culture Day at the State Capitol, inviting artists, arts educators, arts organizations, and Creative Districts.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

**Grant Opportunities**



**The Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant** is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in partnership with Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) to enhance the health, well-being, and quality of life for military-connected individuals who have experienced trauma.

Applications are open now and close Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. CT.

**Apply for Creative Forces Grant**



**Regional Touring Program Grants** is another grant through M-AAA. These grants provide up to \$5,000 to help offset the costs of bringing in guest artists or ensembles from outside the applicant's state but within the M-AAA region.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis for performances and projects between October 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

**Apply for Touring Program Grant**



**Shakespeare in American Communities** provides grants of up to \$30,000 that connect young people across the country to Shakespeare's plays. Grants support performances and workshops in schools and in the justice system, and apprenticeships for early-career theater professionals.

Applications for the 2026-2027 grant cycle are now open.

**Apply for Shakespeare Grant**

## America 250 Celebrations

# AMERICA



As we approach 2026, we anticipate a year of celebrating the United States Semiquincentennial. This will be a time to celebrate the importance of the arts and culture that have defined our country for the last 250 years.

To learn more about upcoming America 250 events, visit the [Nebraska Arts Council America 250 Website](#).



## Benefits of being a member of Nebraskans for the Arts

**THANK YOU** to all of our current members of Nebraskans for the Arts.

If you are not a member, we encourage you to become a part of a network of arts advocates. Your support is helping us expand

our capacity to advocate for arts education, artists, arts organizations, and creative districts across the State of Nebraska. We are your VOICE in arts advocacy.

As a member of NFTA, you receive:

- Two Newsletters
  - NFTA Arts Update Newsletter (5 times a year)
  - Arts Advocate Newsletter (monthly)
- Reduced registration fee for special events.
- Advocacy support and a voice at the state and federal levels.

Individual memberships start at \$25/year.  
BSG / ASE Grant Winners and Creative Districts are encouraged to join.

**Together, we can make a difference for the Arts.**

**JOIN NFTA**



## Nebraskans for the Arts

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