

"Artist Fellowship Program" Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism

Quality of Life Result: All Connecticut citizens and visitors have access to and engage in and with arts, historic preservation and tourism assets, contributing to livable, vibrant and productive communities.

Contribution to Result: The Artist Fellowship Program provides recognition of achievement and funding support for Connecticut artists to encourage artistic development and the creation of new works of art.

Actual SFY 10 Total Program Expenditures: \$130,250 State Funding: \$130,250 Federal Funding: \$0.00 Other Funding: \$0.00
 Estimated SFY 11 Total Program Expenditures: \$131,000 State Funding: \$131,000 Federal Funding: \$0.00 Other Funding: \$0.00

Partners: cultural service agencies (local arts agencies), cultural institutions, higher education institutions

Performance Measure (1)

The Artist Fellowship program engages artists in the visual arts disciplines of crafts, new media, painting, photography, works on paper and sculpture/installation in the even numbered fiscal years and the disciplines of choreography, fiction, film, music composition, playwriting and poetry in the odd numbered fiscal years.

Below is a chart of the overall number of applicants and awardees over the last four fiscal years.

Fiscal Year	Total # of applicants	Total # of recipients
2007	227	34
2008	396	36
2009	175	36
2010	401	37

Story behind the baseline (1)

There is significant demand for the program.

The program engages artists from every corner of the State and it reaches a wide spectrum of participants; emerging artists, mid-career artists and master artists.

Proposed actions to turn the curve (1)

It is necessary to understand the significance artists play in the cultural world around us. Artists are the backbone of arts and cultural institutions and performing theaters. They are the creators behind the books that fill our libraries and book stores and they spur the ideas that make great movies. With this understanding, the Artist Fellowship program strives to consistently reevaluate the categories offered, the submission requirements, the number of grants awarded and the dollar value per grant. As the arts change around us, we must also adjust the program to better serve the artists here in Connecticut.

Partners are engaged to reach out to artists who have applied in past years and to seek out new artists and to encourage their participation in this program. Much of this outreach is conducted through the cultural services agencies that exist throughout the state.

Further partnership has been developing with community colleges and universities. Connecticut is home to an impressive number of great academic institutions, most of which are producing talented, energized, creative artists. The Artist Fellowship program is working to further engage the artists who are completing their education in the arts.

Several emerging artists have received recognition through the Artist Fellowship program. The program, in part, provides these young talented artists with an incentive to remain in Connecticut.

The Artist Fellowship program is also a professional development tool for artist in the areas of developing a strong portfolio, grant writing and resume building skills for artists. Recognizing that there is a greater need for these services, the program is now looking deeper in the area of Professional Development for artists.

Performance Measure (2)

The chart below provides the percentage of artists who received a fellowship award, in relation to the number of applicants.

Fiscal Year	# of recipients / applicants	% of recipients
2007	34 / 227	15%
2008	36 / 396	9%
2009	36 / 175	21%
2010	37 / 401	9%

Story behind the baseline (3)

The program is highly competitive due to the large number of applicants, the small pool of

funds available, along with the rigorous panel review process. On average only 13.5% of applicants receive funding each year.

Proposed actions to turn the curve (2)

The strength of the program is with its competitive nature. Artists must present a strong portfolio of work and demonstrate that they have the ability to continue to create great works of art.

The selection criteria is "Artistic Merit". Applicants are reviewed through a rigorous panel process. Panelists are professionals in the discipline they are reviewing. With this process, recognition itself is an achievement.

To be meaningful and worthwhile to the applicants, it is important to continue with the rigorous panel process. If too many recipients are named, then the program becomes watered down and loses its strength. At this time, the number of awards based on the current number of applicants feels appropriate.

Performance Measure (3)

Funds are awarded in the amount of \$2,500 or \$5,000 with top scoring applicants receiving the higher amount.

Included is a breakdown of the number of grants awarded in the two designated dollar amounts, along with the overall grant program budget for the last four fiscal years.

Fiscal Year	# of \$2,500 awards	# of 5,000 awards	\$ of grants awarded
2007	24	10	\$110,000
2008	20	16	\$130,000
2009	23	13	\$122,500
2010	24	13	\$125,000

Story behind the baseline (3)

Small amounts can make a big difference. The Artist Fellowship program is a small grant program and recipients of this program are citizens of Connecticut who contribute to the local economy as wage earners, tax payers, employees and employers. The amount of the grants are small and; so therefore, the funding received is not substantial enough to put artists to work in their studios but it does allow them to the ability to proceed with their work with less financial barriers.

The job of an artist is to create new and exciting works. But the creative aspect of this occupation is not one that can be financed easily through a small business loan, so most artists supplement their careers by holding down another job which assists them to finance the creation of their work. Often, even the small amount of the award makes a big difference. Instead picking up that summer teaching position, the artist now has the summer available to create new works of art.

Proposed actions to turn the curve (3)

The recognition of the award often invigorates the careers of the recipients, giving them the nudge to go forward with publishing "that book" so it can find its way into bookstores nationwide or finishing "that film" so it can move forward to festivals such as Sundance.

No specific data is currently collected to document the actual impact of the grant funds. The final report captures how the funds were used but going forward, new final reports will look for ways to capture statistical information that can better illustrate the overall impact of the funds. This will help to better assess if the amount of the grant awards should be adjusted.

While more funding is always a welcome sight, strong programs can still function on limited resources. The Artist Fellowship is one of these strong programs. "Recognition" of great work in a competitive pool of applicants is a significant boost to the spirit of the artist.

Performance Measure (4)

Testimonials

Story behind the baseline (4)

Testimonials are a significant part of the final report process for the Artist Fellowship program. Unfortunately, testimonials cannot provide statistical charts at least not in their current form #4.

Proposed actions to turn the curve (4)

The collection of further statistical information is currently being explored. Testimonials will always be part of the final reports due to the shear power and expressiveness which is captured within these documents.

Soon, these powerful statements will be accompanied with statistics which will better illustrate the importance and impact of this program on both the recipients and the State of Connecticut. Final reports will include a greater focus in capturing data from artists which will highlight the significance the grant plays on their ability to advance their careers and to impact job creation.

In addition to putting the artists themselves to work, Choreographers hire dancers, Playwrights hire actors, Music Composers hire musicians, Visual artists hire studio assistants and Filmmakers hire actors to name a few. Much of the time, the small award simply adds the starter fuel to the fire and from there the recipient is able to sustain the energy to complete the work.