

**Indiana Arts Commission
Quarterly Business Meeting**

Friday, July 18, 2025, 11:00 a.m. (ET)

Indiana Government Center South – Conference Room A

302 W Washington St, Indianapolis, IN 46204

Anne Penny Valentine, Chair



There will be a brief break at approximately 12:00 p.m. (ET), with an origami demonstration by Commissioner Greg Hull

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

- a. Welcome (Anne Penny Valentine, Chair)
- b. Welcome New Staff
- c. 6th Street Arts Alley in Columbus, IN (Daniel Martinez, Commissioner)
- d. Roll Call (Austin Hendricks)

2. Review and Approval of Agenda and March 7, 2025, Minutes (Valentine)

ACTION

3. Consent Agenda (Anne Penny Valentine)

ACTION

a. Items Submitted for Commission Approval

- i. FY26 Contract Authority Delegation

b. Reports for Review:

- i. Arts Trust Report
- ii. Communications Report
- iii. Staff Updates and Activity Report
- iv. Lifelong Arts Report
- v. Accessibility Grant Program Update
- vi. Partnerships Report

1. Committee Reports

a. Committee on the Future

- i. FY25 Year-End Financial Report (André Zhang Sonera)
- ii. FY26 Arts Trust Draw Request (André Zhang Sonera)
- iii. FY26 Budget Presentation (André Zhang Sonera)

ACTION

ACTION

ACTION

b. Programs, Grants, and Services

- i. FY26-27 Arts Organization Support (Eric Ashby)
- ii. FY26 Arts Project Support - Spring Cycle (Eric Ashby)
- iii. Traditional Arts Indiana Update (Eric Ashby)
- iv. Artist Services Presentation (Jordan Adams)

ACTION

ACTION

2. Regional Arts Partnership Update (Kayla Myers and Sherri Wright)

3. Consent Agenda Items Moved to Full Agenda (if any) (Anne Penny Valentine)

4. Old Business and New Business (Anne Penny Valentine)

5. FY26 Officer Election and Approval (Anne Penny Valentine)

ACTION

6. Adjournment of Quarterly Meeting (New Chair)

ACTION



To: Executive Committee
From: André Zhang Sonera, Deputy Director & Chief of Staff
Date: June 26, 2026
Subject: **Fiscal Year 2026 Contract Signature Authority Delegation**

This request authorizes the Indiana Arts Commission's Executive Director to sign contracts and other binding documents on behalf of the Commission's Chair for **Fiscal Year 2026 for the period of July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026.**

Under Indiana Code, the Commissioners of the Indiana Arts Commission have the powers to:

IC 4-23-2-3 (4) To enter into contracts, within the limit of funds available therefor, with individuals, organizations and institutions for services furthering the objectives of the commission's programs;

IC 4-23-2-3 (5) To enter into contracts, within the limit of funds available therefor, with local and regional not-for-profit corporations or associations for cooperative endeavors furthering the objectives of the commission's program; and

IC 4-23-2-3 (8) To make and sign any agreements and to do and perform any acts that may be necessary to carry out its purposes and duties.

Per the Indiana Arts Commission Governing Policies:

Section 9.4 Authority of The Executive Director – The Executive Director shall negotiate and sign contracts on behalf of the Chair of the Commission should the Commission authorize by resolution such authority. The Executive Director may delegate this authority but remains accountable for its use; and

Section 13.0 Commission Meetings - At its last Quarterly Business meeting of the fiscal year, the Commission must pass by resolution authority for the Executive Director to sign contracts and other binding documents on behalf of the Chair of the Commission. Said resolutions shall be attested by the Secretary of the Commission.



Connie Brahm
Marketing and Communications Director
Indiana Arts Commission

cbrahm@iac.in.gov

FY25 Q3 Trust Report

Lifetime Interest	\$917,565.89
Lifetime Plate Revenue	\$4,190,773.09
FY25 Distribution	\$(28,356.36)
Interest Available	\$470,040.58
Fund Balance as of March 31, 2025	\$4,655,814.32

Fiscal Year	Quarter	Interest	Sales Revenue	Plates Sold
FY24	4	\$68,390.57	\$34,600.00	1,384
FY25	1	\$79,230.17	\$32,175.00	1,287
FY25	2	\$58,202.09	\$26,850.00	1,074
FY25	3	\$41,488.88	\$27,850.00	1,114

Inv. Number	Current Investments	Book Value	Rate	Maturity Date	Projected Annual Interest
600307	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Coupon Note	\$ 500,000.00	0.1000%	3/30/2026	\$ 22,805.56
600749	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Coupon Note	\$ 500,000.00	0.5000%	6/11/2027	\$ 88,125.00
522	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Investment Pool	<u>\$ 3,600,000.00</u>	0.4460%	12/31/2025	<u>\$ 575,835.56</u>
		\$ 4,600,000.00			\$ 686,766.12

Matured Investments and Coupon Payments Since 7/1/2024					
Inv. Number	Current Investments	Book Value	Rate	Maturity Date	
600555	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Coupon Note	\$ 1,000,000.00	0.5100%	1/27/2025	\$ 25,500.00
600307	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Coupon Note	\$ 500,000.00	0.1000%	3/30/2026	\$ 5,582.11
600768	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Coupon Note	\$ 299,916.00	0.5150%	12/30/2025	\$ 7,682.08
600792	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Coupon Note	\$ 1,900,000.00	0.5500%	4/8/2026	\$ 42,961.11
600749	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Coupon Note	\$ 500,000.00	0.5000%	6/11/2027	\$ 12,501.68
600555	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Coupon Note	\$ 1,000,000.00	0.5100%	1/27/2025	\$ 12,750.00
600768	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Coupon Note	\$ 299,916.00	0.5150%	12/30/2025	<u>\$ 3,946.50</u>
	Total Government Interest Income				\$ 110,923.48
522	Bank of NY - Gov Agency Investment Pool	\$ 3,500,000.00	0.4460%	12/31/2025	\$ 67,846.81
	Plus Sec Lending Income				<u>\$ 50.85</u>
				Total Interest	<u>\$ 178,821.14</u>



To: IAC Commissioners

From: Connie Brahm, Marketing and Communications Director, Gwendolyn Pickett, Communications Manager

Date: June 6, 2025

Subject: Communications Update

FY25 Q3 Announcements

- [Indiana Arts Commission accepting applications for two grant programs](#)
- [Ashby Promoted to Arts Commission Program Director](#)

Departmental Updates

- Alex Peters, rising senior at Butler University majoring in Arts Administration, has joined the Indiana Arts Commission as the Communications Intern through the Governor's Summer Internship. Alex is assisting the department on social media, storytelling, and strategy around the Arts Trust License Plate.

Communications Department Goals

Following agency goal setting, the Communications Department established the following goals for the year:

- Introduce a refreshed agency impact reporting structure and brand identity.
 - Work with a marketing firm on a refreshed brand identity.
 - Release an annual report and suite of accompanying storytelling materials and social media campaign.
 - Introduce a refreshed slide deck for agency storytelling and official Commission proceedings.
 - Introduce refreshed newsletters templates and concepts.
- Implement a standardized set of communications around programs and services.
 - Introduce a color-coding system, based on programmatic area, where each IAC program has its own defined sub-suite of the IAC brand.
 - Create and implement a standard template of webpage for all IAC programs, making sure all programs mirror one another in information shared and language used.
- Launch a programmatic video campaign.
 - Launch a video series, highlighting agency programming and providing an informational overview.
 - Feature interviews, partner footage, participant and facilitator perspectives,

- and highlighting community engagement and impact.
 - Utilize the videos on program webpages, with cross-promotion on social media, newsletters, and YouTube.
- Conduct a procedural refresh, documentation, and departmental impact reporting launch
 - Produce SOP Documents for major departmental operations, outlining procedures and best practices for role-specific tasks.
 - Introduce a Communications Impact Reporting Plan, introducing departmental KPIs and implementing a tracking mechanism to demonstrate departmental impact and improvement.
 - Update the Departmental Procedures Document, reflecting changes to processes and newly adopted departmental, agency, and state procedures.

The Communications Department has established individual goals and work plans to build toward agency, departmental, and personal goals throughout the year.

Summer 2025 Departmental Projects

- Establishing and implementing a new promotional strategy for the Arts Trust License Plate.
- Supporting promotion and storytelling around the Work in Progress Exchange Labs and The Creative Leap in partnership with the Artist Services department.
- Managing communications around postponement of the FY26 funding decision notifications and preparing for the announcement of public funding following that notification.
- Supporting the share out phase of the Lifelong Arts Indiana research and toolkit.
- Aligning communications with the messaging and direction of Governor Braun's Freedom & Opportunity Agenda.



To: IAC Commissioners
From: Austin Hendricks, Administrative Assistant
Date: July 9, 2025
Subject: Staff Activity Report CY25 Q2

Below is a summary of the IAC staff's involvement in statewide, regional, and national activities relevant to the agency's work.

IAC's STAFF ACTIVITY REPORT | SECOND QUARTER OF 2025

It has been a busy quarter for the IAC Staff!

Eric spoke at a number of events including **Indiana's Department of Education's Title Con** in April and the **Arts United Regional Arts Council Meeting** in June with **Britt**. He also attended Every County Funded grantee **Mount Ayr's** opening ceremonies for their new Arts Center.

Connie was a guest speaker for an *Introduction to Arts Management Class* at **Indiana University's O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs** in Bloomington. She also attended **Columbus Area Arts Council's** ribbon cutting for the *6th Street Arts Alley*—designed by the Landscape Art and Architecture Office and Commissioner Daniel Martinez!

André attended the *Diasporican Cultural Summit* at **Hunter College (CUNY)**, connecting with Puerto Rican Arts and Culture leaders across from across America.

Eric and **André** both served on grant review panels in May of this quarter. **Eric** for the **Nebraska Arts Project** grants, and **André** for the *Walking together Program* for **Arts Midwest**.

Jordan and **Eric** co-presented at *Shop Talk for American Folklore Society Professional Development Institute* regarding the Artist Needs Assessment. **Jordan** then went to attend *Artist Thrive Summit* in Kansas City, MO.

Other activities and staff participation:

- March 2025 – **Eric** and **Jordan** present at the *Folk arts Partnership Development Institute*.
- March 2025 – **Connie** attends the *Indiana Tourism Conference* connecting visitors' bureaus around Indiana.
- May 2025 – **Connie** attends the *Indiana Economic Development Course* and **Eric** attends the *Center for Rural Engagement Conference*.
- May 2025 - **André** and **Britt** attended **Indiana Measurement Performance Hub Data Day**
- June 2025 - **Connie, Eric, Andr** and **Alex** attend the **Indy Arts Council's Strategic Plan presentation**.
- **Britt** has completed several trainings, including **LinkedIn's Advanced Excel/Pivot Table Training** and **Trailhead's Tableau Training**.



To: IAC Commissioners

From: Eric Ashby, Director of Programs

Date: July 9, 2025

Subject: Lifelong Arts Indiana Research Executive Summary

To evaluate the impact of the Lifelong Arts Indiana program, the Indiana Arts Commission engaged the University of Indianapolis Center for Aging & Community (UIndy CAC) to conduct a rigorous evaluation process resulting in some of the most robust research findings on creative aging programming in the country.

Findings of the research on include that Lifelong Arts Indiana:

- improves the mental health of older adults.
- has even more significant impacts on well-being in rural communities.
- creates meaningful employment opportunities for artists.
- creates sustainable community partnerships.
- is a solution for the issues impacting older adults' well-being.

UIndy CAC conducted the Lifelong Arts Indiana evaluation using a variety of research methods, including interviews with participants, artists and site partners; surveys of training participants and older adult project participants; site observations; and document review. The evaluation scope was robust: 18 project facilitators were interviewed one-on-one, 18 project sites were observed in person by trained evaluators, and 322 surveys were collected.

Notable within this valuable data is a nationally validated survey of health, the short-form-12 health survey (SF-12). The data from the SF-12 forms indicates that participants in the Lifelong Arts Indiana program report higher levels of well-being in both physical and mental health compared to the national average. In particular, statistically significant improvement in mental health among Lifelong Arts Indiana programming participants indicate that improvements in well-being are a direct result of participating in Lifelong Arts Indiana.

Nationally, an evaluation of this size and scope has not been done on a creative aging program for nearly two decades. This research contributes critical new knowledge to the field of creative aging, providing evidence to support the case that high-quality, sequential arts activities led by trained artists significantly improves the mental health of older adult participants and serves as a cost effective, critical resource to combat social isolation.

Lifelong Arts INDIANA

An Innovative Approach to Creative Programming for Older Adults.



**INDIANA ARTS
COMMISSION**

Evaluation Report Summary

Indiana has an aging population that is rapidly increasing. From 2005 to 2040, the state of Indiana is expected to have a general population growth of 15%; over that same time frame, the number of people 65+ will increase by 90%. One in five Indiana residents will be 65 or older within ten years. For many rural counties in Indiana, all age groups are expected to decline in population except the 65+ age group. According to the State Well-Being Rankings for Older Americans, Indiana was ranked 46 out of 50 states in health and well-being, as reported in their most recent publication. An aging population that reports a low quality of health and well-being is in significant need of support.

Artists and Arts organizations are natural partners in serving this vulnerable population. They are embedded in communities across Indiana and are trusted allies in community development and skilled in partnership development. Most arts organizations serve older adults, and many provide arts learning activities in their community. Artists and arts organizations also provide general art opportunities and a pathway for older adults to deepen their social connectedness and arts enrichment. Utilizing the strong assets of Indiana's local artists and arts organizations, Lifelong Arts Indiana works to improve older residents' physical and mental health and can bring value to program participants, communities and the state.

The Indiana Arts Commission (IAC), in partnership with Indiana Family and Social Services Administration's (FSSA) Division of Aging and Division of Mental Health and Addiction, designed and implemented the Lifelong Arts Indiana (LLA) initiative to bring evidence-based participatory arts programming to older adults across Indiana between 2022 and 2024. The first part of the initiative trained artists and providers of services to older adults on a participatory arts framework designed by the IAC in consultation with national experts. The second part of the initiative awarded funding to LLA-trained facilitators for the implementation of programming of their own designs within their own communities. In total, \$514,600 was awarded to a total of 107 individual artists, older adult-serving organizations and libraries across 44 Indiana counties impacting more than 2,000 older adult participants.

“ Art as a process is good for mental health. When you are in the studio, you are able to let what is happening to you go and just love the process.”

- Lifelong Arts Program Participant



Creative Expression with Watercolor and Mixed Media, Photo by Scott Lengerich.

To evaluate the impact of this program, the IAC engaged the University of Indianapolis Center for Aging and Community (UIndy CAC) to conduct a rigorous evaluation process resulting in some of the most robust research findings on creative aging programming in the country. This report summarizes the findings of this evaluation process.

FINDINGS

- Lifelong Arts Indiana:
- improves the mental health of older adults.
 - has even more significant impacts on well-being in rural communities.
 - creates meaningful employment opportunities for artists.
 - creates sustainable community partnerships.
 - is a solution for the issues impacting older adults' well-being.

APPROACH

UIndy CAC conducted their evaluation using a variety of research methods, including interviews with participants, artists and site partners; surveys of training participants and older adult project participants; site observations; and document review. The evaluation scope was robust with input from many participants representing diverse perspectives: 18 project facilitators were interviewed one-on-one; 18 project sites were observed in person by trained evaluators; 36 final report documents were analyzed; and 322 surveys were collected.

Notable within this valuable data is a nationally validated survey of health, the short-form-12 health survey (SF-12). The data from the SF-12 forms indicates that participants in the LLA program report higher levels of well-being in both physical and mental health compared to the national average. **These statistically significant changes indicate that the improvements in well-being are a result of participating in Lifelong Arts Indiana.**

Nationally, an evaluation of this size and scope has not been done on a creative aging program for nearly two decades. This research contributes critical new knowledge to the field of creative aging, providing evidence to support the case that high-quality, sequential arts activities led by trained artists significantly improves the mental health of older adult participants, opening up an exciting new pathway of potential health interventions that can improve quality of life at a fraction of the cost of most medical treatments. It also serves to bolster the growing national movement toward creative aging initiatives as a meaningful way to support this vulnerable and growing population.

Huntington Arts and Entrepreneurial Center, Create & Celebrate with Flowers Workshop, Photo by Ngozi Rogers.



DEEP IMPACTS

This evaluation examined many dimensions of impact the Lifelong Arts Indiana program provided for Indiana communities. Aside from the immense positive impacts to the health and well-being of older adults, this evaluation discovered how the design of the training experience for project facilitators set them up for success in delivering meaningful experiences to older adults. It was also discovered that older adults found confidence in themselves and created new social connections that lasted well beyond the classes.

These programs developed an atmosphere of trust and safety among participants and created a sense of accessibility to creativity previously unknown to the participants.



Without these programs, exposure to the creative arts for older adults doesn't exist for some areas."

- Lifelong Arts Program Participant

Greenwood Public Library + Southside Art League, The Magic of the Zhen Xian Bao: Chinese Thread Box, Photo by Sonja Lehman.

CONCLUSION

The Lifelong Arts Indiana program provides a successful example of how to implement evidence-based creative aging programs. The evaluation report demonstrates the statistically significant outcomes of the program being implemented statewide and makes an undeniable case that more states should more deeply invest in similar initiatives to improve the lives of their older adult citizens now and in the future. Aging is inevitable for all, and as we see improvements in medicine, our older adult communities will become an even more significant percentage of our population.

Creating an infrastructure to ensure the quality of life for older adults now will improve our communities for generations. Programs like Lifelong Arts Indiana are a key piece of the strategy to making our communities a place to age well. Increased investment in these low-cost solutions is essential for Indiana and beyond.

ABOUT THE INDIANA ARTS COMMISSION

The Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) is an agency of state government that works directly with communities, creatives and organizations to harness the power of creativity to strengthen Indiana. Through its programs and services, the IAC funds and supports arts experiences, arts education and the arts economy to enhance the quality of life for Indiana's people and places.

To learn more about the Indiana Arts Commission, Lifelong Arts Indiana and the other agency programming, please visit [IN.Gov/Arts](https://www.in.gov/arts).



CENTER FOR AGING
& COMMUNITY

UNIVERSITY OF INDIANAPOLIS



INDIANA ARTS
COMMISSION
MAKING THE ARTS HAPPEN



To: Programs, Grants and Services Committee, Commissioners
From: Eric Ashby, Director of Programs
Date: 6/27/2025
Subject: Accessibility Grant Program Update

Background

The Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) established a partnership with Indiana Humanities (IH) to pilot an Accessibility focused grant program to offer rolling low-barrier small dollar value grants to improve accessibility to arts and humanities opportunities across the state. This program was intended to fund activities such as contracting American Sign Language interpreters for events or renting equipment to improve physical accessibility in spaces. The IAC planned to contribute up to \$20,000 for the program.

The framework for this grant program was approved by the Commission at the December 2024 Quarterly Business Meeting.

Program Update

The program was scheduled to launch in January 2025 and run for the 2025 calendar year. However, the program is currently paused indefinitely as both IAC and IH navigate changes in organizational budgets and staffing. The IAC will revisit this program with IH as circumstances allow as well as explore other programmatic partnership opportunities that meet shared goals.



To: IAC Commissioners
From: Miah Michaelson
Date: June 25, 2025
Subject: External Partnerships Report

National and Regional Partners

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) – National (Federal) Partner

The IAC receives funding from the NEA through its State Partnership Program, the only grant the IAC is eligible to receive from the NEA. State Partnership funds support the Arts Organization Support program, Regional Arts Partner Professional Service contracts, staff salaries, the partnership with Traditional Arts Indiana and the Poetry Out Loud program.

Significant changes have occurred at the NEA since the beginning of the year, most notable among them the rescindment of hundreds of grants in various phases of implementation, the elimination of several grant programs, the issuance of executive orders that would seem to be in conflict with the agency's authorizing legislation, and the departure of nearly two-thirds of NEA staff. Many arts organizations in Indiana have been impacted by these rescindments as well as abrupt cancellation of grant programs at other federal arts, culture and humanities-focused agencies such as the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

At this writing, the future of the NEA and of the state partnership program that supports the state and jurisdictional arts agencies across the country remains uncertain. Support for the NEA has enjoyed broad bi-partisan support in Congress in the past, but the political environment has shifted, and we continue to monitor and engage in contingency planning around the possibility that federal support is no longer available to encourage and support arts and cultural activity in Indiana.

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) – National Association

NASAA is our national "trade association", and IAC staff are active in both role-based networking and in topic-based presentations. Miah continues to sit on the NASAA's Planning and Budget Committee. There will be a gathering of Executive Directors and Deputy Directors in Omaha in November, and the IAC will be there.

Arts Midwest (AM) – Regional Partner

[Arts Midwest](#) is the IAC's [Regional Arts Organization](#). Arts Midwest administers grant programs on behalf of the NEA and does its own granting as well. Arts Midwest regularly brings the Executive Directors of its member states together for in-person strategy sessions.

Arts Midwest has also been impacted by recent changes at the NEA – and as they receive a greater percentage of their operating support from the NEA through various programmatic partnership agreements - the organization is undergoing a strategic rethink in which the IAC is actively participating.

Miah continues to serve on the Arts Midwest board as one of two state arts agency representatives and provides support via various sub-committees.

State Government Partnerships

The agency continues to partner with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) on the state's regional economic development efforts through READI, more specifically through [funding made available through the Lilly Endowment](#), Inc for regional arts and cultural development. Funds will support regional arts and cultural planning and subsequent project development meant to drive transformation in the state's arts and culture ecosystem. Miah continues to serve as lead for the agency in these efforts.

Other In-State Partnerships

Indiana Communities Institute

ICI continues to partner with the IAC in support of the Creative Convergence program for communities.

Indiana Humanities

Indiana Humanities (IH) is the current state partner for the Poetry Out Loud national poetry recitation competition, a program of the National Endowment for the Arts. IH provides administration of the state program and finals competition with funding and assistance from the IAC. The IAC had planned to partner with IH on a pilot accessibility grant program, but that program is on hold indefinitely.