

2020 Party Platform: Arts and Humanities

Getting America's Creative Workers Working

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic and heightened awareness of social and racial injustice, we believe our nation needs to capitalize on the abundance of under-employed yet talented creative and racially underrepresented workers in America to aid in the recovery, unity, and healing of our nation's communities and economy. As federal efforts are considered to rebuild and grow the nation's economy, we urge targeted federal policies to tap creative workers, nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and arts-related businesses and minority-run organizations to be featured in any infrastructure, workforce development, economic, and education efforts.

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the arts and culture add \$878 billion a year to our nation's Gross Domestic Product, representing 4.5% of the GDP and 5.1 million jobs and has a growth rate of nearly double the rest of our economy. Of that, the national economic impact of the nonprofit arts and culture industry alone boasts \$166.3 billion in economic activity annually, and generates \$27.5 billion in federal, state, and local government revenue.

Investing in existing creative enterprises, fostering the growth of new businesses, and investing in creative economy workforce development will help revitalize and strengthen both our national and local economies now and into the future.

We also believe in the importance of engaging people in our country's most underserved and rural communities in the arts and humanities, and in making them accessible to all people. We specifically value arts education for its development of imagination, creativity, innovation, and critical thinking skills, and the preservation and expression of our nation's rich cultural heritages, through the arts and humanities. Evidence supports the positive physical, social, emotional, and economic impact and benefits of the arts and creative arts therapies for military and veteran-connected populations. Federal grants to the nation's nonprofit cultural organizations, scholars, and state and local governmental arts agencies help to increase participation, enhance appreciation, and nourish the intellectual and artistic curiosity of our nation. The arts and culture build bridges between communities, deepen people's understanding of our common humanity and catalyze healing.

To that end, we believe the federal government should:

- Target a broad cross-section of federal programs to specifically encourage and tap creative workers, creative businesses, and racially under-represented creative groups in any infrastructure, workforce development, economic, education and public health efforts throughout every federal agency from the Department of Labor to the Department of Defense.
- Support the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities by doubling their funding and indexing them to \$1 per person, currently funded at only \$162.25 million each (44 cents per person).
- Support expanding S.T.E.M. education to include the arts to become S.T.E.A.M. to help further imagination, creativity, innovation, and critical thinking skills, as well as reinstating the necessary data collection to continue issuing the nation's report card in the arts.
- Support an across-the-board charitable tax deduction so that all taxpayers, including non-itemizers, are encouraged to make donations in the favorite charities that make their communities stronger and their lives better.
- Through the *Serve America Act* provisions, AmeriCorps can and should fully launch an "Artists Corps," so that artists can be tapped to bring more innovation, creativity, and economic development to address unmet needs in our communities. Much like the historic WPA program, this work can help to nurture and support necessary change in the face and heart of America.