

FALL UPDATE FROM NEW YORK CITY ARTS COALITION

Wednesday, October 27, 2010

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Fall Update 2010 - October 19, 2010

Cultural Data Project

This is probably your least favorite topic, next to hearing about another funding loss, but if you have not responded to requests from the staff at Pew to correct or clarify data you sent, please, please take care of it. The Advisory Group to the Cultural Data Project will not approve research use of the data until many more groups have answered outstanding questions about their data. The number of those who have done this is too small for the sample to be considered representative.

This is our best chance to have reasonably up to date information for advocacy in February, and it is really important. Most of the economic and fiscal data in this field is too out of date. It is also lacking in some details needed to answer questions from elected officials.

Advocacy is the first real "use" of the data that can benefit everyone. As frustrating and time consuming as it has been and probably will be to finish this, if you have not done so, I hope you can manage it in the next couple of weeks.

Mid-year cut to Dept. of Cultural Affairs

The 5.4% cut announced by the Mayor several weeks ago has not been finalized, but details have been submitted by DCA to OMB as to how they would implement this decrease. Assume it to be a reality in your planning.

Also, please note that the same announcement from the administration said that the Mayor planned an 8% cut to next year's budget. Obviously we will seek to avoid that outcome in next year's final budget.

One Percent for Culture Campaign

Please join this effort. It is a very straightforward campaign to persuade elected officials to provide 1% of the city budget for cultural needs. FYI, 1% in the current budget year would be \$646 million. We have \$149.5 million in the current DCA allocation before the mid-year cut outlined above.

A "sales pitch" to cultural groups seems unnecessary, and if you have questions, please email me at npmunn@nycityartscoalition.org as I am on the Steering Committee of the effort. We don't expect immediate success, but culture currently receives less than one quarter of one percent of the budget, and we struggle year after year just to stay close to level funding. In fact, our real funding has decreased since 2000 and with inflation, the loss is even greater than the numbers show.

You can join by going to <http://www.oneforculture.org> where you will also find additional information about how you and your supporters can take concrete steps to reach this goal. There is no cost to you, so please show your support. We need it.

Unintended Consequences of the recent federal Health Care legislation

The health care legislation contained many aspects designed to raise funds to pay for some parts of the change. One of them is a requirement that all corporations (including non-profits) send a 1099 to vendors from whom they purchase goods or services for \$600 or more during the year. (Think telephone, equipment purchases, printing, messenger services, caterers, etc. etc.)

We are accustomed to sending 1099s to people who work briefly, but not to vendors. This requirement starts in 2012 and efforts are underway to get it repealed or amended to eliminate corporations with 25 or fewer employees, and/or to increase the amount to \$5000 instead of \$600. Even IRS seems to have doubts that it will help them improve the reporting of business income and hence, the collection of taxes.

The only exception at this time is that you would not have to send a 1099 to another tax-exempt entity.

Until the dust settles on the November elections, no one is going to pay much attention to letters from you on this subject, but I encourage communication with both NYS Senators and your local House representative. Nothing long, just tell them what a burden this is going to be and ask them to get it either eliminated or at least increase the limit far above \$600.

Personal Comment: This is just plain dumb. IRS does not even have a system for comparing all the 1099s to hundreds of thousands of vendors across this country to their actual business returns. It is just more paperwork in a system already over burdened by paper and regulations that are maddening. I will try to keep up with what happens to this, but just in case, you might want to make sure your accounting system can actually do this.

State Budget Issues

Efforts are underway to create a statewide Arts Week in the early part of the budget period. This would include a framework for more local efforts which are less expensive, PSAs, a Facebook campaign, a special insert about the arts in the Legislative Gazette, and plans for a focused day in Albany, but not an Arts Day as in the past. Contact has been made with a number of arts councils around the state since NYSArts is

probably not in a position to plan or implement any advocacy efforts at this time. Without an actual budget, all we can do at the moment is plan for a general approach and fill in the specifics after the first of the year. More information as plans move ahead. Questions and suggestions are welcome.

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