

DANCE WORKER DIGEST | OCTOBER 2025

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By Dance/NYC

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This month's Digest highlights key developments affecting our field, including the federal government shutdown's impact on essential programs to a major legal win against the NEA's anti-trans policies. We also share resources for artists affected by the Red Hook fire and celebrate the addition of five new members to New York City's Cultural Institutions Group.

Federal Government Shutdown Endangers Food Assistance and Other Programs



After lawmakers failed to pass a budget by the October 1 deadline, the federal government entered a prolonged shutdown. The shutdown threatens essential programs and the livelihood of an estimated 750,000 federal workers who may be furloughed each day. This includes the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), which currently anticipates having enough funding reserves to outlast the shutdown. Should that run out, its contingency plan includes furloughing 94 out of 98 employees, and ceasing all non-legally required functions except for those related to the creation of Trump's National Garden of Heroes.

The largest and most immediate impacts will be felt by recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program, as both run low on funds. States have been warned that if the shutdown continues, full benefits for November may not be issued, putting millions of families at risk of hunger. In response, Governor Hochul has fast-tracked \$30 million in State funds for emergency food assistance in addition to the \$11 million for emergency food relief programs previously announced.

- [Learn more about the impacts of the government shutdown](#)
- [Review this guide for nonprofits on what to do during a government shutdown](#)
- [Review the NEA's government shutdown contingency plan](#)
- [Check out Artists from Abroad's advisory on artist visas and the shutdown](#)
- [Share how federal cuts have impacted you](#)

Photo credit: Andrew Leyden/ZUMA Press Wire/Shutterstock

Arts Groups Win Lawsuit Reversing the NEA's Anti-Trans Requirements



A Rhode Island federal judge recently ruled in favor of Rhode Island Latino Arts, National Queer Theater, the Theater Offensive, and Theatre Communications Group in their lawsuit against the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

Earlier this year, the NEA—an agency that provides federal funding for arts and culture—began requiring grant applicants to certify that they do not "promote gender ideology" as part of the award decision-making process to comply with President Trump's "gender ideology" executive order. Meaning that groups could be deemed ineligible for supporting trans artists and audiences, including actions as simple as using gender-inclusive language. In response, the

four groups sued, and the NEA paused the policy in March.

The court has now overturned the NEA's anti-trans requirements, ruling them a violation of the First Amendment. The agency will no longer require the certification or disfavor applicants based on perceived "gender ideology." This decision marks a major win for the arts and culture community, especially LGBTQ+ artists and organizations.

- [Review the ACLU's press release on the judge's ruling in the NEA case](#)
- [Check out Dance/NYC's response to the initial NEA compliance mandates](#)

Photo credit: Graeme Sloan/Sipa USA/Alamy Live News

Resources to Support Artists Impacted by the Red Hook Fire



On September 17, a large fire spread through historic warehouses on Red Hook's waterfront, significantly damaging the studio space and artwork of more than 500 artists. Because the fire has not been declared a federal or state emergency, affected artists are ineligible for government disaster relief and must rely on grassroots community and private support to recover. Here are some resources for impacted artists and we encourage dance workers to support and share within our community.

- [Donate to help Red Hook artists & business rebuild after fire](#)
- [Review this resource list for artists impacted by Red Hook Fires](#) including emergency funding

and salvage advice

- [Join the weekly Red House Warehouse Response Facilitation Calls](#) Fridays at 2:00 p.m. with the National Coalition for Arts Preparedness and Emergency Response and Safety Net Coalition
- [Check out the National Heritage Responders](#) who have retrieved and are working to conserve over 800 works from the fire
- [Review coverage on the fire and its impact on the artists](#)

NYC Cultural Institutions Group Welcomes Five New Members



This fall, the city announced the addition of five new members to the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG): BRIC; Bronx Children's Museum; Louis Armstrong House Museum; Noble Maritime Collection; and Pregones / Puerto Rican Traveling Theater.

The CIG is made up of cultural organizations that operate on City-owned property and receive annual operating support from the city government. This funding provides a key source of financial stability, and the five new members represent the largest expansion of the group since the 1970s.

Funding for these additions stems from a major budget advocacy win earlier this year with an unprecedented \$75 million increase to the City arts and culture budget, including the first baseline funding growth in over a decade. This well-deserved recognition and stability for these five organizations mark a major victory for the entire NYC cultural community and the power of collective advocacy.

- [Check out the City's announcement about the new CIG members](#)
- [Learn more about the Cultural Institutions Group](#)
- [Learn more about the historic budget win](#)



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