

DANCE WORKER DIGEST | APRIL 2025

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By Dance/NYC

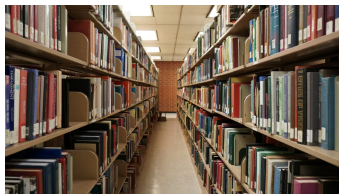
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Dance Worker Digest

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Welcome to the April Dance Worker Digest. This month, we cover major developments across federal and local levels that impact our arts and cultural ecosystem. At the federal level, cuts threaten key agencies that support libraries, museums, and the humanities. Locally, the NYC Council's FY26 preliminary budget response and resolution backing the NYC Arts Space Act highlight funding priorities. We also highlight new legislation to protect transgender New Yorkers.

Federal Agencies Funding Humanities, Libraries, and Museums Slashed



The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) have joined the recent slew of federal government agencies to be targeted by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). As a result, 80-85% of IMLS and NEH staff have been placed on indefinite administrative leave—impeding the agencies' critical functions—and canceled all open grants including funding for state humanities agencies.

The IMLS and NEH represent a combined \$411.34 million of funding for cultural institutions across the country. Libraries, museums, archives, public TV and radio, and more rely on this funding to be able to create the cultural vibrancy in which dance and the arts thrive. Efforts to

reverse these changes have begun. Two lawsuits have been filed to stop the defunding of the IMLS. This includes one filed by 21 State Attorneys General and one filed by the American Library Association and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

- [Take action to protect the IMLS and NEH](#)
- [Review the National Humanities Alliance's statement on threats to the NEH](#)
- [Review the American Library Association statement on threats to the IMLS](#)
- [Explore what to do if your federal grant or contract is terminated](#)

New York City Council Releases their FY26 Preliminary Budget Response



This April, the New York City Council released their Fiscal Year 2026 Preliminary Budget Response that will shape how the city moves forward before the budget is finalized on July 1. This is the latest action in the New York City Council budget process, which determines funding for essential public services, including arts and culture.

The Response includes key investments in the cultural landscape of our city

- a \$75 million baselined increase in arts and culture funding
- \$41 million in baselined funding for arts education

These figures echo what Dance/NYC and the larger arts and culture sector have advocated for, underscoring how influential advocacy and civic participation can be. If these increases are included in the finalized budget in June, it would be a significant move towards better financial sustainability for dance workers, dance organizations, and the broader arts sector.

- [Take action to protect arts and culture in the city budget](#)
- [Check out the press release on the Preliminary Budget Response](#)
- [Learn more about arts education in the city budget](#)
- [Learn more about arts and culture funding in the city budget](#)

Legislation to Protect Transgender New Yorkers Introduced by NYC Lawmakers



In February, the New York City Council held a hearing on access to supports for transgender, gender nonconforming, and nonbinary (TGNCNB) New Yorkers. During the hearing, lawmakers introduced a number of proposed bills, that if passed, would:

- Establish a city-driven "know your rights" campaign for TGNCNB New Yorkers
- Make it illegal to physically interfere with someone's access to gender affirming care and reproductive healthcare facilities
- Have the city develop a plan to support newly arrived TGNCNB youth
- Require the city to develop a TGNCNB health agenda

It also included a number of resolutions calling on New York State to pass laws that would:

- Strengthen health privacy protections
- Require NYC hospitals to adhere to World Professional Association of Transgender Health Standards of Care
- Prohibit the federal government and other states from accessing New York State data about the use of hormone therapy, abortion medication, and puberty blockers

The [State of NYC Dance 2023 Report](#) found that 50% of dance workers identify as LGBTQIA+, and 19% as transgender or non-binary. In light of increasing attacks on LGBTQIA+ rights, it is important that we all support and protect our queer and trans communities.

- [Review coverage of the new legislation](#)
- [Scan the text of the proposed bills](#)

City Council Passes Resolution in Support of NYC Arts Space Act



On March 26, the New York City Council passed Resolution 0720-2025, calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, the NYC Arts Space Act. If passed, the law would incentivize developers to include affordable arts spaces like studio, rehearsal, performance, and programming spaces, in housing development. The resolution signifies increased attention and support for the bill, bolstering continued advocacy by the arts community.

According to the [State of NYC Dance 2023 Report](#), both dance workers and organizations name space as one of their top five needs. Mobilizing dance workers in support of this bill is

part of the *Our New York City Dance* campaign's [advocacy priority](#) of creating sustainable space for dance.

- [Check out the press release on the resolution](#)
- [Call on NY lawmakers to pass the NYC Arts Space Act](#)
- [Review the text of the New York City Arts Space Act](#)

Photo courtesy of Playbill

