

# cultural *recovery*

This discussion paper was created to call a question that has been emerging into visibility since the nomination of Barack Obama for President:

**Is the time right for cultural action to be recognized as a powerful force for democracy?** Is there now a sufficient mass of activists and thinkers committed to cultural democracy to propel a broad-based, highly participatory movement advocating for democratic cultural policy, for substantial roles for artists in national recovery, for a shift to thinking about public policy and priorities that recognizes culture’s essential role as a crucible for change?

**Cultural Recovery** is a project to build and sustain a coalition of artists, cultural organizations and their allies in other realms of social action, education and organizing. They would join to promote the democratic interest in culture, including democratic cultural policies and substantial public investment in community development, education and community service through the arts. Its centerpiece would be **culturalrecovery.net**, an online center for information and organizing. While it would be home to a full range of initiatives to bring attention and resources to culture’s mobilizing power, its first targeted initiative would be a campaign to create a substantial, sustained public-sector investment in community service programs employing artists and cultural organizations as part of national recovery, **WPA2**.

This discussion paper lays out the need and the concept. **Please feel free to forward it to anyone who might be interested.** (Copies can be downloaded from <http://arlenegoldbard.com/culturalrecovery/>. If the idea is sound, we hope to find partners through the circulation of this paper:

- An institutional incubator for **Cultural Recovery**, a 501(c)3 organization that can serve as a launching-pad for the project;
- Contributed income to support the costs involved;
- Steering Group members willing to invest their wisdom and influence in the project.

If you would like to become an endorser of **Cultural Recovery** —as an organization or an individual—please send a letter as an email attachment to Arlene Goldbard at [arlene@arlenegoldbard.com](mailto:arlene@arlenegoldbard.com). Questions and comments will also be gratefully received. If you prefer to talk by phone, please call 415-690-9992.

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# cultural recovery

*The “arts...teach people to see through each others’ eyes...to respect and understand people who are not like us. That makes us better citizens and makes our democracy work better....[I]maginations sparked by the arts are more engaged.”*

Barack Obama

## The Need for Cultural Recovery

The United States is in the grip of an economic crisis of unprecedented proportions. Fear is epidemic, each day bringing new headlines to feed it. Calls for the spirit of citizenship are heard everywhere. In his address to a joint session of Congress in late February, President Obama told Americans this: “We are a nation that has seen promise amid peril, and claimed opportunity from ordeal. Now we must be that nation again.”

President Obama has proposed a program of public investment in infrastructure, energy, health care, and education. It is hoped that these, along with bailouts and regulatory interventions in the banking system, will revive the economy, unblocking the flow of credit, adding jobs and thus initiating a slow return to prosperity. Realistic housing policies and close scrutiny of financial markets have been advocated to help to neutralize Bush-era laissez-faire mistakes that produced this crisis. But neither the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 nor the budget President Obama submitted in February reflect recognition of the essential role culture must play in any meaningful recovery. Based on long study and experience, community artists and their allies and partners in other fields know that:

- The resilience that sustains communities in times of crisis is rooted in culture, in the stories of survival and social imagination that inspire people to a sense of hope and possibility even in dark times. Sharing our stories as song, drama, literature or image supports resilience by showing people how others met similar challenges, survived and prospered.
- Through art, people prepare for life’s challenges in the safe space of imagination, strengthening their creative judgment before it is tested. Artists expand social imagination, helping us envision the transformations we hope to bring about, stimulating our thoughts and feelings toward the new attitudes and ideas that will drive recovery.
- In economic terms, culture is a powerful generator of prosperity.<sup>1</sup> According to Americans for the Arts<sup>2</sup>, arts patrons invest more than double the cost of their tickets in the local economy

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<sup>1</sup> *Using Arts and Culture to Stimulate State Economic Development*, National Governors’ Association Center for Best Practices, January 2009.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.artsusa.org/information\\_services/recovery/default.asp#economicrecovery](http://www.artsusa.org/information_services/recovery/default.asp#economicrecovery)

(on transportation, meals, lodging and other associated costs). They estimate that every dollar of NEA funding leverages seven million in support from local, state and private sources. By the most conservative indicators, more than two million professional artists are at work in the USA today, and as the economy worsens, this sector rapidly loses income and employment. The economic principles that prescribe public job creation in other sectors as the key to getting money back into circulation apply to arts employment just as to any other sphere of economic activity.

- As the nature of work changes, culture becomes more and more key to social and community development. The “knowledge economy” is actually a cultural economy. It’s not just bits and bytes of data that are supporting jobs these days: without the imagination and artistry to devise and convey the words, sounds and images that fill our hard disks and iPods, Web 2.0 would be dead in the water. The skills of imagination, improvisation and problem-solving learned through artistic creativity are applicable, even essential, to countless new jobs that will be created as the economy morphs through its current fundamental restructuring—not just to work in arts professions.
- Indeed, anyone who wishes to make significant headway on a social problem or opportunity must engage with people’s feelings and attitudes about it. For example, no financial intervention will save the economy unless confidence is restored. Challenges to social well-being must be addressed by cultural as well as practical means: promoting safer sex, reducing the incidence of diabetes, treating addictions, spreading green consumer habits—these and countless other public aims are being helped immeasurably by artists’ skill at engaging people in considering their own views and communicating freely with others.

At every moment of crisis in U.S. history, artists and cultural activists have been ready to place their gifts at the service of democratic public purpose. During the New Deal of the 1930s, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s response to the Great Depression included key roles for artists. Many programs were created to employ artists. The longest-lived were grouped under the heading “WPA,” for Works Progress Administration, a huge employment relief program started in 1935 at the beginning of FDR’s “Second New Deal.” These arts projects made up Federal Project Number One, generally known as “Federal One,” a project comprising five divisions: the Federal Art Project, the Federal Music Project, the Federal Theatre Project, the Federal Writers Project and the Historical Records Survey, together employing more than 40,000 artists by the end of its first year (at its height in 1938, including all types of workers, the WPA employed 3.3 million of the estimated 20 million souls on relief). At that time, the total U.S. population was about a third of today’s.

The New Deal included a range of programs addressing structural unemployment and infrastructure development in many sectors, from agricultural price supports to infrastructure projects, building roads and amenities such as parks and amphitheatres. The New Deal was remarkably effective, with public investment helping to raise both personal expenditures and GDP from the year it was inaugurated. Today, nearly 75 years later, the federal arts programs of that period are the most familiar and beloved part of FDR’s legacy, persisting in memory as chief symbols of the entire New Deal. They have served that function because they generated images

and stories embodying the spirit of the times. Federal One delivered to the future a rich legacy of music, theater, painting, photography, writing and design that continues to capture our imaginations. As the nation moved toward economic recovery, these arts projects helped to bring about cultural recovery, reframing the moment from one of isolation and despair to one of partnership and possibility.

The painter Stuart Davis, opening the first American Artists' Congress in 1936 (as its secretary), expressed artists' willingness to help in national recovery in this way:

In order to withstand the severe shock of the crisis, artists have had to seek a new grip on reality. Around the pros and cons of "social content," a dominant issue in discussions of present day American art, we are witnessing determined efforts by artists to find a meaningful direction. Increasing expression of social problems of the day in the new American art makes it clear that in times such as we are living in, few artists can honestly remain aloof, wrapped up in studio problems.

Since World War II, more and more artists have sought satisfying professional and social roles in community cultural development, participatory projects in which artists collaborate with others to express concerns and aspirations, recovering histories, beautifying communities, teaching, expressing cultural creativity as a universal birthright and a bottomless source of resilience for both individuals and communities. (See Appendix A for a concise introduction to this practice of community cultural development, also called "community arts" and "community-based arts.") Arts-based approaches help communities to realize their fullest potential (as by engaging the full spectrum of participation), to make the most of their resources (through improvisation and creative reuse) and to maximize their return on investment, by creating large impacts in proportion to costs. Because it is driven not by market considerations but by community members' own desire for cultural connection, for expressive opportunities and recognition for their contributions to local and national history, their practice constitutes a social good, like public education, not a market-driven commodity. It has flourished most in times of public investment.

In the 1970s, a period of high unemployment and urban unrest, community artists and arts organizations took advantage of public service employment programs through the Department of Labor, notably CETA (the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act). At its height, CETA invested approximately \$200 million per year (over \$700 million in 2009 dollars) in jobs for artists teaching, performing, creating public art and administering arts programs in the public interest. For a few years (until Reagan abolished them as soon as he was elected), these programs were a mainstay of the community arts field; almost every community artist active in those days either had a CETA job or was close with someone who did. Many of today's most notable practitioners and most-admired organizations were helped by CETA in their desire to pursue the democratic interest in cultural life, promoting vibrant cultural citizenship rich with cross-cultural sharing, sites of public memory commemorating community history and pride, works of dance and theater that deepen and refresh understanding, stories that heal, opportunities for young people to express themselves and learn through artistic practice.

Sustainable recovery is rooted in communities' own awareness of challenges and their own knowledge of everything that supports resilience and healing. Artists are uniquely able to stimulate social imagination, working with people to cultivate creativity, connection and strength. Today, as always, sustainable national recovery demands cultural recovery.

## Why Now?

How can the good news of cultural recovery permeate the awareness of more policy-makers, spreading beyond those champions who understand and support cultural recovery? The documentation, description and experience to make this case are available, but three things have until now prevented community artists and other cultural development advocates from actualizing cultural recovery on the scale needed:

- (1) Anti-art campaigning.** Beginning in the eighties, well-organized forces opposing government social spending developed aggressive campaigns to demonize art and artists, caricaturing and ridiculing public arts expenditure in order to use it as a club to beat public spending to death. Resurrecting these residual attitudes takes very little energy: the \$50 million allocated to the NEA in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, although it represented a minuscule fraction of the bill's expenditures (less than 1/100th of one percent) and a drop in the bucket in relation to both need and opportunity, garnered a large portion of the headlines. Many voters and policy-makers hear "the arts" and think of waste, excess and frivolity at public expense. Any campaign for cultural recovery must address this attitude, which is both a cause and a result of the next point.
- (2) Lack of information and exposure.** Since CETA days, community cultural development work has been starved for resources. Groups with long track-records and professional development staffs, groups with leaders possessing star-quality charisma, have been able to survive and in a few cases, prosper until very recently. Community arts work is a basic social good that is already present in every part of the nation. With allies, champions and resources, it should and could pervade every community across the U.S., as much part of every community's fair share as public schools and libraries ought to be. But instead of public investment in these essential elements of public infrastructure, we have seen cuts in even more basic services, including those same libraries and schools. Those lacking the opportunity to work with adept and experienced community cultural development practitioners are unlikely to know what they are missing, let alone become advocates.
- (3) Inadequate field and campaign infrastructure.** For community cultural development practitioners and their allies, the years since Ronald Reagan ended CETA shortly after taking office in 1980 have been daunting, initiating a decades-long decline in support for their work. Artists have organized effectively around single issues and affinities, with groups like the National Alliance of Latino Arts and Culture, for example, building a field, and groups like the Future of Music Coalition organizing response to changes in the music industry. While community-based arts activity has been creative and energetic, overall, the spirit of the times has been defensive. Preoccupied with developing a tightly bounded aspect of the field or

preserving a saving remnant of resources, artists have been unable to prioritize the collaborative effort and investment needed to work together for a larger agenda of cultural democracy, making public cultural policy and funding more responsive and democratic, promoting the democratic interest in a vibrant, inclusive, participatory cultural life for every community.

For the first time, the ingredients are in place to change this picture. The time is right for community-based artists and their allies to become a significant force in public policy discourse and political action, working for cultural democracy: creativity, pluralism, equity and participation in a cultural life that strengthens community and democracy.

Artists had a large and significant presence in the election of President Barack Obama, creating murals, posters, videos, songs and music videos, poems, dances and stories that helped tell Obama's story to the world with deep conviction, in living color. The work of artists moved people to vote who had previously been disconnected from or demoralized by electoral politics. It gave spirit and heart to the already active. It embodied a new idea of diversity, cutting across ethnic divisions, borrowing from every sort of artistic vocabulary to create vibrant works that carried the campaign's message to every corner of the nation. Through the work of artists, voters learned not only the candidate's views, they also glimpsed the remarkable power of hope to move mountains. For the first time in memory, working artists had a role in articulating a presidential platform.

Those artists came from several sectors, each with its own constituent elements and focal points, all ripe for alliance:

- Teaching artists, a growing phenomenon whereby thousands of artists have dedicated their working lives to serving alongside teachers as carriers of culture, introducing young people to artistic expression and nurturing their gifts; and supporters of arts in education.
- Community development advocates, neighborhood-based community organizers and issue-based activists whose understanding of culture's power has grown as their work deepens, using theater, moving image media, music, movement, visual imagery and other arts work to educate, awaken, mobilize.
- Younger-generation artists and activists grounded in hip-hop culture and other insurgent cultural movements working for racial and social justice: since the Obama campaign, there are indications that cross-generational ties can be built with cultural advocates who look to the thirties, sixties and seventies for inspiration.
- Artists oriented toward particular policy issues or specific ethnic or disciplinary affinity groups, whose main focus has been the internal development of their own field but who saw in the campaign an umbrella for cross-cutting aims. While 501(c)3 groups like the Future of Music Coalition, the National Alliance of Latino Arts and Culture and the National Performance Network could not be active in the election per se, their constituents were.

- Participants in what have been called the “informal arts,” such as amateur photographers, needleworkers and other crafters, community gardeners, members of local ethnic performing arts ensembles and youth-oriented dance clubs. Many participants are part of immigrant communities working to preserve their heritage cultures. Like professional artists in their communities, they have a lively interest in the development of local cultural life along with the other issues that motivated their participation in the presidential campaign.

Since the election as during the campaign, these artists and allies have been a strong creative engine, organizing locally and nationally and generating policy proposals that can help democracy recover from its long depression under the previous administration. Dozens of cultural alliances and arts advocacy organizations have weighed in with ideas about how the new administration can make America’s community-based cultural infrastructure an integral part of the country’s democratic renewal, some with program initiatives focusing on specific education or community development goals. The National Campaign to Hire Artists to Work in Schools and Communities has organized support for public service jobs for artists as part of economic recovery legislation. The activist poet’s group “Split This Rock” has campaigned for one percent of recovery funds to support artists’ work. The National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture proposed a “Digital Arts Service Corps.” Americans for the Arts has campaigned to preserve NEA funding as part of recovery legislation. The Music National Service Initiative has called for the formation of MusicianCorps to work in schools and communities. Arlene Goldbard’s essays on the Community Arts Network (“The New New Deal” parts one and two), calling for a “new WPA for artists,” have been widely and enthusiastically received, linked and forwarded. New ideas keep emerging, such as the “Arts Stimulus Plan for New Jersey and The Nation” released by Ben Goldman in early March. When a previous draft of this discussion paper was circulated for comment to a dozen key thinkers and activists, almost all of them replied (most in precisely these words) that “this is an idea whose time has come.”

## **The Cultural *Recovery* Framework**

**Cultural *Recovery*** is a project to build and sustain a coalition of community-based artists, cultural organizations and their allies in other realms of social action, education and organizing. As a think-tank, educational resource and action center, it will enable them to join to promote the democratic interest in culture, including democratic cultural policies and substantial public investment in community development, education and community service through the arts.

The core of **Cultural *Recovery*** is conceived as an online presence, rather than a physical location. Our model is derived from the Obama presidential campaign, from groups like MoveOn.org and the League of Young Voters, each of which created a hub for activism online, inviting people to convene face-to-face at the local level to bring the campaign home, providing information and organizing assistance to coordinate local activism. The **Cultural *Recovery*** Web site is conceived as a container and facilitator for the learning, involvement and activism that will realize this aim. It would use the full range of artistic creativity to involve community cultural development practitioners and their allies, spreading our message with viral speed; equipping visitors with the information and tools they need to underpin responsible, effective activism; building a network with plenty of room for local initiative; stimulating and spreading good ideas;

and spurring artists and their allies to take action on the cultural issues that inspire their passion. The aim is to give every visitor a way to connect, share and inspire each other.

It would feature the following sections and capabilities:

- A concise statement of mission and an easy-to-use utility for visitors to register for the site and become endorsers of **Cultural Recovery**'s mission. An impressive list of endorsers from every cultural sector and powerful allies from other sectors working to advance the development of just and equitable communities.
- The national campaign would be linked to local efforts by social networking features that allows users to locate others who are active in their own communities or on similar issues. There would be a page of links to related local project Web sites. Through the site, **Cultural Recovery**'s organizing director would help local activists use the project's resources to strengthen their own efforts and network with related efforts elsewhere. Local training workshops and house parties would build local involvement.
- Action alerts on progress toward **Cultural Recovery**'s mission, reporting on relevant gatherings, publications, legislative actions and opportunities to take action, including customizable letters to allies, officials and agencies. Links to actions and briefings by other arts and community-related groups (such as Americans for the Arts, the mainstream arts lobby, and various professional associations for artists and organizations). Sample op-eds and templates for convening local meetings and coalitions would be downloadable. Those who register for the site would also receive updates via email.
- A technical assistance library and referral service to help community arts partners gain access to funding and other resources from the growing number of new (arts and non-arts) Federal, state and local sources that will become available in the coming years. Case-studies from successful applicants for recovery funds, as inspiration and reference for others.
- Database management with open database connectivity, enabling the project to tailor alerts to specific groups of registrants, making optimal use of a growing database to connect and mobilize participants when action is needed.
- A cross-sector commons and marketplace where partnerships with other community activists and change movements (e.g., sustainable community development, social justice and environmental activists, education reformers) can be fostered, nurtured and studied.
- A background section with concise histories of democratic cultural initiatives including the first WPA and CETA arts, with links to a rich array of websites that demonstrate and document what can be accomplished with policies supporting cultural democracy and by artists working in community (e.g., CAN, communityarts.net, is the premier Web site for community arts information; our aim with this advocacy-oriented site is to supplement, not compete with it.) This section would also link visitors to online publications on initiatives consonant with **Cultural**



**Recovery's** mission, including the idea of a new "Federal One" for artists, and to other sites with relevant information.

- Part of **Cultural Recovery's** rich interactivity would be inviting artists to create video clips, poster images, songs, short scripts and other works to advocate for democratic cultural policies and initiatives and demonstrate what they could do. To start things off, we are working with the National Campaign to Hire Artists to Work in Schools and Communities to create short videos featuring inspiring, recognizable voices advocating public service jobs for artists: a video featuring actor Bill Irwin is already in circulation; videos featuring Peter Coyote and Arlene Goldbard are in production; and we anticipate an impressive line-up of advocates and testimonies that will help **Cultural Recovery** go "viral." This downloadable media as well as works created by users would fill a featured section of the site, with links to an online shop to purchase T-shirts, posters, tote bags and other merchandise emblazoned with the most popular and effective images. We expect **Cultural Recovery** T-shirts would become as ubiquitous as "Rock The Vote" has been in some presidential campaigns. Website visitors would also be able to make online contributions.
- A **Cultural Recovery** blog would incorporate messages from the campaign as well as reports from the field, ideas for actions, sharing stories of success, posing questions for colleagues, discussing strategy and tactics. Requiring registered users to provide a full name and email address would eliminate problems of "drive-by posting" or "flaming," making the blog user-friendly for participants.

## **WPA2: First Among Many Initiatives**

The democratic interest in culture has many dimensions. For example, here are just a few of the public issues directly relevant to **Cultural Recovery's** mission:

- **Community Development:** Integrate cultural considerations with community and economic development efforts, recognizing and supporting cultural life's contribution to livable communities.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Ensure that the heritage enshrined in museums and other public institutions reflects an inclusive history, acknowledging all communities' contributions. Promote inclusive education that links every school child to this nation's usable past.
- **Media:** Promote adequate funding for public media, including a diversity of voices and visions to correct for marketplace imbalances. Maintain accessible public space in an increasingly commercialized online environment. Support education for media literacy.
- **Artists:** Promote access to health insurance and other social protections for creative workers. Ensure that artists' work is supported for its role in community development. Support viable roles and decent livelihood for teaching artists in public education.

Over time, **Cultural Recovery** could be a platform for countless initiatives. Depending on local interest, people could use its resources to research and plan activism around using recovery funds to support artists' work in health promotion, democratizing a local cultural tourism program, preserving and expanding arts education, creating public art, and other opportunities to support a

democratic interest in culture. By using **culturalrecovery.net**'s information and activism toolkits, sharing information on their own efforts and linking to others with relevant experience, activists could make **Cultural Recovery** work for the broadest range of relevant issues.

But there is a clear starting-point. Because it has already generated a great deal of interest, because it is crucial to national economic recovery and because it provides an exciting and feasible focus for **Cultural Recovery**'s development, **WPA2** would be **Cultural Recovery**'s first focused campaign.

New Deal artists' employment programs represented a convergence of opportunity: they addressed high unemployment in the arts sector while advancing public aims for community cultural development. The next time a sizeable federal public service jobs program came along with CETA in the mid-seventies, artists again joined the effort to rebuild and reinvigorate our social and cultural infrastructure, teaching, performing and creating sites of public memory for hard-pressed communities. Today, conditions once again create convergence: recovery is needed for both the economy and our collective muscle of social imagination and democratic participation. **WPA2** is based on the recognition that there are many ways that artists, working with public-sector stimulus, can help.

**WPA2** is not a sectarian enterprise. Its founders are not attached to a single model for a "new WPA." We recognize that programs emerging from keen, active public interest in this concept are likely to be an amalgam of many good ideas put forward, and we see **WPA2** as a welcoming home for a full range of these program and policy ideas. As the conversation evolves, we anticipate arriving at a program proposal that works for the greatest number. (To consider some possibilities, see Appendix B for two of the configurations that have thus far been put forward, one outlining 15,000 creative sector jobs, the other as many as 100,000.) It is likely that the first steps toward **WPA2** will be local or regional inroads into using existing recovery funds to support artists' work, accommodations worked out between program administrators and local applicants. Down the road, a critical mass of education and organizing could bring about purpose-built programs—in effect, a "Federal One" for our times. The key point underpinning the **WPA2** campaign is not a specific program model, but commitment to meaningful levels of support for cultural recovery as part of national recovery, as reflected in the campaign's statement of purpose:

**To achieve a substantial, sustained public-sector investment in community service programs employing artists and cultural organizations as part of national recovery, allocating at least \$800 million per annum in federal funds for that purpose, with compatible programs at regional, state and local levels throughout the United States.**

At a minimum, **WPA2** needs a period of years to evolve and make an impact; certainly, it ought to be integral to the eight years of recovery hoped-for under the Obama administration. Part of the dialogue we hope to host **Cultural Recovery** concerns whether this same type of public provision for community cultural development should be an ongoing feature of government, and if

so, how this is to be accomplished. For now, promoting two presidential terms of **WPA2** constitutes an ambitious project, yet in the context of the larger economic and public policy environment, not overly so. After all, \$800 million is equal to the cost of a mere 36 hours of the war in Iraq,<sup>3</sup> 1.7 percent of Exxon's record-breaking 2008 profits<sup>4</sup> or less than four percent of the \$787 billion OMB estimates the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 will cost.<sup>5</sup>

The constituency for **WPA2** is ready to be audacious and to capture public attention.

## **Streamlined Organization**

**Cultural Recovery** is conceived on the principle of doing the most with the least: \$318,500 would support the project's first full year of operations. We are seeking an organizational sponsor to bring the project's educational elements under its 501(c)3 umbrella for fiscal sponsorship (interim or permanent); as the project is established, a 501(c)4 structure would also be developed as a focus for advocacy. Professional staff would comprise a campaign director, an organizing director and an administrator to provide logistical support, all working with consultants to design and execute the Web site.

Staff would be guided by an all-volunteer steering committee of no more than 11 members, all of whom would be individuals well-respected within arts and social change fields. The steering group is conceived as highly diverse, including people of different ages, regions and cultural backgrounds, artists and non-arts activists or policymakers, a group reflective of the larger coalition we hope to build. For now, while the concept's feasibility is tested, the following individuals have agreed to take part as advisors (many of whom offered a brief explanation for their involvement). Please note that organization names are listed for identification purposes only:

**Maribel Alvarez**, Assistant Research Social Scientist and Research Professor, The Southwest Center & English Department, University of Arizona, Tucson: "Far worse than the crisis of the credit and housing markets, rising unemployment, or external security threats, a crisis of imagination has already proven devastating for our national psyche, will, and spirit. Artists and cultural workers are untapped resources we cannot afford to ignore nor waste; artists' ways of innovation, improvisation, and inspiration must be the ways of us all. That's why I believe that the WPA2 is so profoundly visionary and consequential."

**Arnold Aprill**, Founding and Creative Director, Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education: "The arts need to be reintegrated into the social and economic lifeblood of our country because that is the only way for all citizens to become active creators of culture rather than simply consumers of culture, for every child, woman, and man to become an actor in history, not simply an audience to history."

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<sup>3</sup> See the National Priorities Project, <http://www.costofwar.com/>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/01/30/exxon-mobil-reports-repor\\_n\\_162468.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/01/30/exxon-mobil-reports-repor_n_162468.html)

<sup>5</sup> Congressional Budget Office report to Speaker Nancy Pelosi February 13, 2009. See: [www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/99xx/doc9989/hr1conference.pdf](http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/99xx/doc9989/hr1conference.pdf).

**Caron Atlas**, program director, Arts & Community Change, Pratt Center for Community Development, Brooklyn, NY.

**Judy Baca**, Cofounder, Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC), Senior Professor Chicano/a Studies and World Arts and Cultures Departments, University of California at Los Angeles: "I believe we need the most creative minds in America working to rebuild humane and sane communities."

**Ludovic Blain III**, racial justice advocate, Oakland, CA: "America suffers from a terrible recent economic crisis, but an even worse long-term cultural crisis. We need a recovery program that helps our economy, but more importantly helps America and Americans make tough decisions without scapegoating. Progressive cultural infrastructure is the way forward."

**Janet Brown**, Executive Director, Grantmakers in the Arts, Seattle, WA: "Artists have always played a role in the growth and development of America, whether people understood it or acknowledged it. From our churches to our county fairs; from treasures held in art museums to the theatres that entertain us, artists are central to our lives and how we live successfully in our towns and cities. There are no better workers: smart, disciplined, visionary, inspired and clever. WPA2 is a road to cultural and economic recovery for America."

**Jeff Chang**, Author/Journalist/Activist, 2008 USA Ford Fellow in Literature, Berkeley, CA: "A vibrant, vital, intergenerational, community-driven cultural policy is crucial if the U.S. is to meet the national and global challenges of the 21st century. That's why I believe the Cultural Recovery project is so important."

**Dudley Cocke**, Director, Roadside Theater/Appalshop, Whitesburg, KY: "In 1964, fifty miles as the crow flies from Appalshop's base in Whitesburg, Kentucky, President Lyndon Johnson started the War on Poverty. These hills of hard times are also the birth place of bluegrass and country music. We know how stories and songs can be the difference between despair and hope."

**John Kreidler**, Executive Director, Cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley (retired): "The idea of WPA2 as a tool of economic recovery has several advantages. Artists can go to work quickly, without the long lead times of most infrastructure projects, they can work with minimal equipment and materials, and they have the capacity to lift the public spirit: Lots of bang for minimum bucks."

**Liz Lerman**, Founding Artistic Director, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, Takoma Park, MD.

**Nick Rabkin**, Chicago, IL: "Like the Depression, this economic and political moment is perilous, but it is filled with opportunity to retool industries, reinvent our schools, revitalize communities, and deepen our democracy. Our cultural policy has not fully recognized the profound contributions of artists and the arts in those domains, but, along with so much else, it is high time that changes."

**Erik Takeshita**, Consultant/Senior Program Officer Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Minneapolis, MN: "It has been said that the definition of 'insanity' is doing the same thing and expecting different results; creativity, arts and culture, particularly the rich cultural diversity we have in the United States, are critical assets essential to creating new and sustainable paradigms for the 21st Century."

**Cultural Recovery** was conceived by Arlene Goldbard ([www.arlenegoldbard.com](http://www.arlenegoldbard.com), Kansas City, MO), Bill Cleveland ([www.artandcommunity.com](http://www.artandcommunity.com), Bainbridge Island, WA) and Michael Schwartz ([www.michaelbschwartz.com/](http://www.michaelbschwartz.com/), Tucson, AZ), arts activists with a depth of experience and knowledge concerning cultural policy issues, cultural organizing and past public initiatives putting the arts to work in cultural and community development. They have already contributed substantial content toward the Web site and are prepared to continue playing key roles in planning and executing the project. This project embodies their passions, values and commitments to social change and they have volunteered to give it close and focused attention.

## Long and Short-Term Aims

Though we are optimistic, it is impossible to predict the timeline and traction to be achieved in pursuit of our first initiative, the **WPA<sup>2</sup>** project, spurring the creation of a “new Federal One” within the next few years. But whether or not that specific goal is soon accomplished, the project would have significant, unprecedented and sorely needed effects:

- It would help to develop a knowledgeable, active constituency of community-based artists and their allies in support of democratic cultural policy and public cultural initiatives in general;
- Participants would generate new ideas and actions that inspire others to take creative action for democratic cultural policy and public initiatives in own regions or fields;
- It would provide an organizing model with strategies, resources and networks, with coordination to assist local organizers in adapting them for their own initiatives at the local and regional level;
- It would put community artists and their allies on policymakers’ maps, giving essential cultural concerns a public face and political clout; and
- It would serve as a long-term resource for activism, providing a launching pad for future initiatives to bring about cultural democracy.

As a new locus for activism and policy development, if **Cultural Recovery** is viable, that will mark a watershed moment, the instant when a diverse group of activists and organizations built a powerful, creative constituency committed to cultural democracy, throwing off past demoralization to practice the cultural politics of hope. Now is the time!

## Proposed Developmental Timeline and Budget

By 17 March 2009 Discussion paper is circulated for response.

15 April	Responses incorporated. If feeling is positive, revised paper is sent with invitation to prospective steering group members. Organizational umbrella sought.
1 May	Plan for basic Web site architecture in progress; timeline in place for 15 October launch, building continues through launch Revised paper sent to potential endorsers and potential contributors Core team follows up with prospective contributors
15 May	Steering group in place Building continues
15 August	With 50% of first year budget committed and job description approved by steering committee, campaign director search launches
15 September	Campaign director begins, hires organizer and administrator
15 October	Web site launches Wide promotion to individuals and networks Action alerts appear regularly beginning with launch

Budget	Year One	Subsequent Years
Campaign director (salary plus benefits)	\$ 75,000	\$ 78,000
Organizing director (salary plus benefits)	65,000	68,000
Administrator (salary plus benefits)	55,000	58,000
Local workshops	40,000	60,000
Web site design/building	10,000	
Software, hosting, maintenance	5,000	5,000
Office costs	40,000	40,000
Telecommunications	7,500	8,000
Travel	15,000	15,000
Other overhead	6,000	6,000
Total	<hr/> \$318,500	<hr/> \$338,000

## Appendix A: An Introduction to Community Cultural Development

*The following information is based on New Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development (New Village Press, 2006) by Arlene Goldbard.*

“Community cultural development” describes the work of artist-organizers and other community members collaborating to express identity, concerns and aspirations through the arts and communications media. It is a process that simultaneously builds individual mastery and collective cultural capacity while contributing to positive social change. This work is also known as “community arts” and “community-based arts.”

Projects vary widely in size, scope, the use of arts work and arts media, aims, activities—almost every characteristic. They may be focused on **learning experiences**, such as workshops in theater-making with students, designed to bring curriculum material home in a direct, powerful way. For example, Fringe Benefits Theatre <[www.cootieshots.org](http://www.cootieshots.org)>, based in Los Angeles, conducts “Theatre for Social Justice Residencies” at schools around the U.S., including weekly workshops focused on students connecting past civil rights history to their own present-day realities. In the course of each year, participants wrote and presented four interactive plays addressing discrimination as it affects their own school community.

They may focus on **dialogues**. Consider the “Witness Our Schools” project by Sojourn Theatre <[www.sojourntheatre.org](http://www.sojourntheatre.org)>, based in Portland, Oregon. Beginning in March 2004, this multiethnic, multilingual ensemble theater company conducted interviews with students, teachers, administrators, activists and citizens involved in Oregon’s beleaguered public schools. Their aim was to include all voices and all sides of the contemporary education debate in a theater piece to be performed for—and discussed with—community audiences throughout the region. The dialogues were popular and enthusiastic, impressing educators by opening up the possibility of true exchange on issues previously thought intractable.

They may focus on **documenting** history, unearthing realities that have been obscured by suppression, denial or shame. Frequently, projects aim to create some sort of permanent record that can challenge an oppressive story, whether in print, moving-image media or visual arts installation. Seattle’s Wing Luke Asian Museum <[www.wingluke.org](http://www.wingluke.org)> has consistently grounded its exhibits and other programs with stories and artifacts contributed by members of the Asian-American communities of the Pacific Northwest. In 2002, Wing Luke mounted “If Tired Hands Could Talk.” Asian-American garment workers—Japanese, Chinese, Filipino and Vietnamese women who sustained garment manufacturing in the Northwest—shared their personal stories through oral history interviews, video, archival photographs and artifacts such as workplace equipment and clothing. In 2005, as part of its New Dialogues Initiative series, an exhibit entitled “30 Years After the Fall of Sàigòn” created space for Vietnamese Americans of all ages to cross class and ideological lines in sharing their experiences and opinions of the historic event that precipitated mass migration to America. Community artists work with other community members to enliven and present such materials in every medium that can be imagined: in publications and exhibitions; in murals; in plays produced for theatrical and nontraditional settings; in documentary or narrative film and video programs; and in computer multimedia.

They may **claim public space**, aiming to improve the quality of local life by adding self-created amenities to their communities or by building visibility for their concerns. For example, in the late 1980s, Lily Yeh worked with residents of an inner-city neighborhood to create the Philadelphia-based Village of Arts and Humanities, through which local residents converted empty North Philadelphia lots into parks and gardens, celebrating their achievements with multi-arts festivals. The Village's immediate neighborhood includes nine parks and gardens and two alleyways featuring murals. Angel Alley includes nine powerful Ethiopian angel icons; Meditation Park was inspired by Chinese gardens, Islamic courtyards and West African architecture; the Vegetable Farm was the first step toward a community sustainable-agriculture project; and the Youth Construction Park, created with a group of young people, features a pair of cement and mosaic lions guarding its front entrance.

Other projects turn on **long-term residencies**, where artists assist the users of a senior center or the residents of a neighborhood to create works of public art that express their own identities and feelings. Or on **media projects**, where video makers might work with a group of high-school students to tell their own story in moving-image media.

This brief list by no means exhausts the possibilities. What makes the work cohere into a movement is not particular project characteristics, but shared values. Over time, practitioners of community cultural development have adopted certain key principles to guide their work. There is no universal declaration or manifesto. Rather, each of these seven points has been given a multitude of different expressions in practice.

- 1: Active participation in cultural life is an essential goal of community cultural development.
- 2: Diversity is a social asset, part of the cultural commonwealth, requiring protection and nourishment.
- 3: All cultures are essentially equal and society should not promote any one as superior to the others.
- 4: Culture is an effective crucible for social transformation, one that can be less polarizing and create deeper connections than other social-change arenas.
- 5: Cultural expression is a means of emancipation, not the primary end in itself; the process is as important as the product.
- 6: Culture is a dynamic, protean whole and there is no value in creating artificial boundaries within it, as between disciplines or profit and nonprofit worlds.
- 7: Artists have roles as agents of transformation that are more socially valuable than mainstream art world roles—and certainly equal in legitimacy.



*The following quotations are drawn from Making Exact Change: How U.S. arts-based programs have made a significant and sustained impact on their communities, a report from the Community Arts Network authored by William Cleveland and published by Art in the Public Interest in November 2005*

**Northern Lakes Center for the Arts, Amery, WI**

*A comprehensive cultural center organized and designed to provide local residents with the opportunity to develop and share their creative talents and abilities with one another and with the general public*

Water is a critical life force for the small community of Amery, Wisconsin, located 75 miles northeast of Minneapolis-St. Paul. The Water Project, a project of the Northern Lakes Center for the Arts (NLCA), was a multidisciplinary exploration into the issue of water—its use and abuse. Between November 2000 and December 2001, people working in different art forms presented creative strategies for discussing perspectives on water: a reading and publication of new writings inspired by water; an adaptation of Ibsen’s “An Enemy of the People” to present-day Amery; a chamber orchestra concert featuring water-related classical repertoire juxtaposed with newly commissioned work; the creation of Amery’s first three-dimensional piece of public art; and an exhibition of photography chronicling life along Amery’s Apple River.

This project illuminated the vital role that a local arts agency can play in catalyzing and linking public interest and discourse around a key civic issue in a small community. It examined the training and use of community members as facilitators for dialogue, particularly highlighting the vital role that young people can play; the potential to employ both classic and new work as a stimulus for dialogue; the tailoring of dialogue techniques to the art presented, as well as its anticipated participants; and the effectiveness of joining forces with other partners to build understanding and awareness around an issue. It underscored the difficult balancing act in arts-based civic dialogue that involves fostering authentic dialogue while retaining artistic quality and value so that each has validity and purpose. Throughout the evolution and implementation of this project, NLCA showed how flexibility, openness to opportunities, and a willingness to combine existing and potential resources lead to strengthened artistic activity, broadened public interest and involvement, and increased capacity within the community for meaningful dialogue.

—Cheryl Yuen, “The Water Project,” 2004

**Swamp Gravy, Colquitt, GA**

*Community theater designed to break down the walls that are racial and socioeconomic boundaries to bring to life the stories that have helped shape our community*

The first theater space was an elementary-school lunchroom, and the play performed there was little more than a revue with sketches and songs, all homemade. But it was a sell-out, prompting one local wag to comment, “People will always turn out to see their neighbors make fools of themselves.” People did turn out, but only because the performance was entertaining and touching and the stories local.

With the initial success of the play, the Swamp Gravy players were soon able to move into a 70-year-old cotton warehouse, which became a makeshift theater. The new theater had dirt floors, no heating or air conditioning, brick walls and lofted ceilings. The only sound system came from the lungs of the actors. Lighting was primitive and included washes made from the local football stadium field lights. To combat the sweltering South Georgia heat, members of the audience were given hand fans as they filed in. For many students of the theater, the cotton warehouse would hardly qualify as a proper venue for productions of any kind. Yet the actors and singers performed with gusto and the stage technicians became seriously devoted to their work, providing professional guidance on direction and lighting.

—Ed Lightsey, 2000

**Zuni-Appalachian Exchange and Collaboration**  
**Roadside Theater, Norton, VA and Idiwanan An Chawe, Zuni, NM**

*A 20-year exchange and collaboration between Roadside Theater and traditional Native American artists of Zuni Pueblo, NM, to advance cultural tradition and build community in both locations*

The season theme really started when Roadside came for a visit and Ron Short and I took a ride out in the country to Nutria (Arizona), where I was raised. We were sitting outside my grandma's old house talking about the seasons. I was telling him about how when we planted corn or other seeds, we gave one for Earth, one for the crow, and so on. ... That conversation in Nutria became part of one of the songs he wrote about following the seasons. It's a song about two worlds, with miles of difference between them, and how the seasons and planting were the same. That song is another story about how Appalachia and Zuni collaborated.

—Arden Kucate, 2002

One reason this collaboration worked was because of the amount of time over the years we'd spent sharing and learning about each other. ... We got to the point that we could laugh with and at each other. ... I can't understand all of Zuni culture, but there are some things that have to do with the heart and with feeling that I do understand. Another reason it worked was that the theme of the play – farming — was something we shared. The four of us ... writing the play are about the same age, and we had grown up in a time when farming was still an important part of life—a really important part of our background.

—Donna Porterfield, 2002

## Appendix B: Two Proposals for a New WPA for the Arts

*The following proposed plan is excerpted from Arlene Goldbard's essay, "The New New Deal, Part 2—A New WPA for Artists: How and Why," published in January, 2009 on [communityarts.net](http://www.communityarts.net) ([http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2009/01/the\\_new\\_new\\_dea.php](http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2009/01/the_new_new_dea.php)). The online version contains links to the projects and resources mentioned.*

If I had the privilege of helping to design a new WPA, I would advocate for the range of initiatives described below. The most democratic way to manage them would be to allocate federal funds on a proportional basis to regional authorities and/or the states, who would in turn allocate them to counties, cities and nonprofit organizations, with real local participation and transparency required in decision-making. Because these new programs would be authorized as part of economic recovery (though I'd like to see them continue as ongoing public provision, like public libraries and schools), economic need would be an important criterion. Artists would have to qualify for inclusion by demonstrating low income or long-term underemployment.

To clarify my ideas, I've packaged them as program elements. But I'm not attached to the particular names or most other details, so don't get hung up there. Just invent your own!

**Communities Creating Culture (CCC):** This initiative would be driven by partnerships between communities and experienced cultural development practitioners. Jointly, they would apply for stipends for community artists to plan and co-create works in music, theater, dance, visual art or other forms that would have a specific public purpose: for example, to commemorate an individual, community or history of special importance, creating what Judy Baca has called "sites of public memory"; or to build engagement and interaction in a particular neighborhood by creating a public space infused with cultural meaning, such as a sculpture park or community memorial garden; or to mark a community's centennial with the creation of dance, drama and music embodying the cultures that have contributed to its resilience. Federal funds would go to long-term stipends (at least a year) for artists or groups who would reside in the community, allowing sufficient time for the slow building of trust and the process of mutual education and social imagination that the best community cultural development work requires. The stipend should be sufficient to cover living expenses; and communities should be able to provide or seek other support sources for associated costs such as facilities and materials. Ballparking this at \$50,000 per artist per year for stipend and associated costs, \$125 million would support 2,500 artists.

**Enlivening Public Institutions (EPI):** I see this initiative as supporting teaching artists and others working in social institutions such as schools, hospitals, prisons, community centers and social service organizations. Depending on existing local provision, funds might be allocated to excellent teaching-artist programs already in existence, or where there is no local program, through a new entity. Qualifying artists would make themselves available, either as they emerge from a training program (see the ArtistsCorps description below) or by demonstrating appropriate knowledge and experience, just as they would today when applying to Chicago Arts Partners in Education (CAPE), WritersCorps, Empire State Partnerships or any of the other good programs

operating. Here, too, an annual wage is essential for security and continuity. At \$50,000 per artist per year for stipend and associated costs, \$250 million would support 5,000 artists.

**ArtistsCorps:** This is the framework that has been most widely adopted and advocated already, through the Music National Service Initiative of MusicianCorps that I described in my previous essay, NAMAC's Digital Arts Service Corps, referenced above, and others. They all roughly follow the AmeriCorps model, with a period of service in return for a stipend, insurance and sometimes student loan forgiveness. They all incorporate significant training elements, which makes them most appropriate for newbies. Participants who find their calling in one of these service corps could apply to transition into the CCC or EPI programs described above, which require strongly skilled and experienced artists. ArtistsCorps-type programs, with their emphasis on training, tend to be heavily staffed, which is expensive. But participants' stipends are small, generally around \$10,000 a year (with another \$5,000 or so available toward educational costs). Let's ballpark it this way: At costs of \$25,000 per participant per year, \$125 million could support 5,000 artists.

**National Story Archive (NSA):** Back in the WPA, quite a few programs were aimed at straightforward cultural preservation: the Index of American Design, the Index of American Music, the collection of slave narratives and so on. But in our digital age, private initiative drives an amazing volume of recording, scanning and digitizing of cultural material; although participation needs to be extended across the digital divide between haves and have-nots, there is no need for the public sector to step in and simply document. But there is much need to support and facilitate use of cultural material in a way that serves community development.

I envision this program as having several dimensions: the organization and archiving of materials; the creation of digital stories and other projects responding to local needs; and the broadcast and online publication of programming emerging from the NSA.

Hardware and software would be situated in local communities — at libraries, cultural centers or other accessible venues — where training and support could be provided by media artists, enabling community members to collect, contribute and store information about local culture. Oral histories, scanned documents, still and moving-image media, discussions of issues — a repository of such material could be used in countless ways to tell each participating community's stories. I've written in the past about several projects that could be models. For instance, the early-1990s Mendocino People's Portrait Project included a massive community photographic self-portrait and a storefront community center equipped with computers, scanners and printers to serve as a digital archive; the PlaceStories project created by the Australian community arts group Feral Arts is a custom-built online environment for archiving and digital stories; and much of the work of the Center for Digital Storytelling in California fits this model.

NSA centers would take part in special projects to lift local resources into national visibility. Two types of initiative are especially appealing to me. First, after a year or so of collecting material and carrying out small-scale projects, the NSA could roll out public radio and/or TV series featuring community self-portraits, with production funds awarded from a supplemental pool, and distribution and promotion carried out by participating broadcasters. Second would be a 21st-

century adaptation of the American Guide Series. (Pantheon reissued a bunch of these guides in paperback in the mid-'80s, each focusing on a different city or state; go to a used-book site and search for "WPA Guide to" and dozens will come up for a few dollars apiece.) I'm looking at the San Francisco guide right now: A lively survey of trade-union history appears in one place, and in another, a section treating migrations into the Western Addition as a kind of cultural geology, layer upon layer. Imagine local sites where visitors could access the same kinds of stories and pictures with a mouse click, sites created with the public interest in culture and community in mind rather than simply to maximize profit.

NSA would be a capital-intensive initiative. In some communities, the necessary facilities and equipment are already in place, but subsidy is needed for skilled organizers, writers and media artists to staff the centers; in others, buying computers and other equipment would be part of the program. I'm going to ballpark this at an average annual operating cost of \$400,000 per site, estimating that \$80 million would support at least four centers in every state of the union.

Digital initiatives can also provide work for unemployed high-tech professionals who want to make the shift to public service, thus assisting another stressed economic sector.

**Community Cultural Development Centers (CCCD):** This is the most bricks-and-mortar-oriented element in my dream of a new WPA for artists. If you have ever spent time abroad, where community cultural centers are an expected part of every neighborhood's public provision, you will know what I'm talking about. (I've listed a link below to a brief account of one I visited in Spain in the summer of 2007.) There are some great centers in the U.S., functioning as bases for artistic production, training, meeting-spaces for all kinds of community action and celebration. Appalshop in Whitesburg, Kentucky, is the one I know best; Chicago's Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Humboldt Park is another example of a group soundly rooted in its community, seamlessly integrating arts, politics and community development. In my vision of cultural democracy, every community and neighborhood has a center like this, just as every community and neighborhood ought to have excellent public libraries and schools. This would be less a building program — even \$5 billion would go quickly if it were spent to construct brand-new facilities — than one that helps to support low-cost, green renovation, maintenance, staffing and programming, in essence making up for resource shortfalls exacerbated by the economic downturn. There are already disused storefronts and decommissioned schools in the communities that most need these centers. Let's ballpark the average annual grant at \$400,000 per community center: \$100 million would support an average of five sites in each state. In places with a great many existing centers, that could stretch to provide program or facilities support for a larger number of sites; and where existing provision is scarce, it would seed a goodly number of reuse and renovation projects.

In sum, my personal assessment of priority elements for a new WPA for artists would cost \$680 million a year; bump that up to \$800 million to include administrative costs and overhead, and two weeks' worth of spending on the War in Iraq would give us more than six years of sustained investment in cultural development and social imagination.

*The following proposed plan is excerpted from Ben Goldman's "Arts Stimulus Plan for New Jersey and the Nation: one percent for the creative economy," released in March, 2009. This section focuses on spending one percent of stimulus funds in New Jersey; the report also includes a chart that extends the framework to the national level. (The entire plan can be downloaded from*

*[http://cwow.org/artsstimulus/Arts\\_Stimulus\\_Plan\\_for\\_New\\_Jersey\\_and\\_the\\_Nation.pdf](http://cwow.org/artsstimulus/Arts_Stimulus_Plan_for_New_Jersey_and_the_Nation.pdf)*

### **Shovel-Ready Programs : The State of New Jersey**

New Jersey, which ranks among the top states in terms of the number of artists within its borders, can serve as a model for a national movement to reinvest in America's cultural infrastructure. It can take the lead in creating demonstration projects and programs that use federal funds for these purposes and leveraging this public investment with private and philanthropic dollars. There are plenty of successful national campaigns in the public and non-profit sectors that started modestly and have since achieved comparably ambitious goals with a mix of public and private funds, including Americorps, Habitat for Humanity, Teach for America, YouthBuild USA, and others. The arts need to do likewise, especially given their strategic role in the future of the American economy.

New Jersey's portion of the 2009 federal stimulus package is estimated to be \$17.4 billion. An arts stimulus package of 1% would total \$174 million and could employ over 2,000 artists, create over 200 major works of public art, and provide substantial increased capacity and employment opportunities for over 100 arts organizations throughout the State. Even at half or a quarter of that level of investment, the impact on the New Jersey cultural community and its ripple effects would be unprecedented.

Below are eight major program areas and a brief description of how funds could be rapidly deployed to achieve measurable, immediate positive economic and employment impacts, as well as a long-lasting cultural legacy. The descriptions demonstrate the impact of only a quarter-percent investment. Detailed budgets that follow demonstrate the even greater benefits possible from doubling these investments to one-half-a-percent or quadrupling them to reach the full historical benchmark of one-percent-for-art. Comparable budget figures for a national arts stimulus are also provided, as is a matrix indicating possible sources of the funds available through the 2009 stimulus for the recommended programs.

1. Ready to Unveil. Funded by 1% of public construction funds in the stimulus, this program would spend nearly \$25 million on over 100 major works of public art throughout the State of New Jersey. Public art in public spaces represents the most permanent and memorable impact of arts funding with significant cultural and economic impact, so this program area receives the largest recommended portion of stimulus funds. The goal is to involve a growing number of organizations from the public, private, and non-profit sectors—as well as individuals—to help plan, site, fund and document new works of public art, and launch a nationwide Campaign for Public Art in America. The first milestone of the project will be an open call for artist proposals that envision public art in all media at public sites of their choosing to be mapped using publicly accessible internet technology. Nationally prominent jurors will select the best out of many submissions.

Some works may be temporary and occur during the Summer of 2009, such as concert series and readings in the major public parks. Others will be of a more permanent nature such as outdoor sculptures in public plazas or murals inside or outside of public schools, or technological interventions such as urban screens in transit stations and airports. Selected works will be unveiled as models and sketches in a major cataloged exhibition during the fall of 2009. Construction of permanent works could also begin at that time. The publicity, sponsors, and digital geographic registry of proposals generated by the initial exhibition will be the first step in building a nationwide movement for increased investments in public art. Coordination between agencies for arts, transit, school construction, and economic development will be vital.

2. Arts in Education. A \$5 million investment would fund over 100 artists-in-residence, teaching artists and art teachers of all disciplines to conduct school-based, out-of-school, and summer programs throughout New Jersey, especially in public school systems in low-income and underserved communities. Many such initiatives and collaborations are already underway and many New Jersey non-profit organizations specialize in this area with a wide variety of ready-to-go projects and programs that only need additional funding to scale up and deploy. Major prior investments by the philanthropic sector have already helped professionalize and organize this field, including state certification programs for artists in education. Expanding arts education is the first plank in Barack Obama's cultural platform.
3. Artist Corps. Another plank in Obama's platform is the concept of an "Artist Corps of young artists trained to work in low-income schools and their communities." At \$3 million, this training initiative could enroll over 100 young artists throughout the State to provide mentoring, and professional development to students and individuals seeking work in the creative economy. The Artist Corps would be deployed in community, educational, and arts organizations in this proven strategy to provide jobs to young artists seeking to share their skills and energy. Following the Americorps model, participants would receive entry-level compensation for their efforts as well as opportunities to advance their creative talents with by deferring certain costs of higher education.
4. Creative Communities. With \$3 million, more than 50 experienced cultural development practitioners would collaborate with community organizations on a wide variety of interdisciplinary projects aimed at addressing specific community concerns. Many individual artists and arts organizations have developed programs that demonstrate how the arts can help stabilize communities, prevent crime, provide health-related therapies, increase worker employability and earning power, improve teenage self-esteem and job skills, build literacy and academic achievement among low-income students, reduce recidivism, and much more. These programs all take an instrumental view of the arts as a means of solving social problems and advancing social goals and are characterized by a collaborative approach with a wide range of non-arts organizations, including institutions of higher education, boys and girls clubs, prisons, entrepreneurial social ventures, libraries, hospitals, city planning agencies, tourism councils, industry associations, and more. The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, for example, has developed many successful partnerships with state agencies such as the Departments of Education, Community Affairs, Transportation, Travel and Tourism, statewide associations such as

- the League of Municipalities, American Planning Association, NJ Chamber of Commerce, the Center for Nonprofits (with more than 28,000 NJ charitable organizations), as well as county agencies, colleges and universities. The New Jersey arts community's deep experience with collaborations, including statewide associations by artistic discipline such as dance and theater, as well as regional entities for writers, poets, visual, video and technology artists, makes it uniquely "ready to go" with projects in this priority area.
5. Creative Capacity. With another \$3 million, substantial investments of general operating support should be targeted to the most innovative local cultural institutions to build their capacity and stabilize them during this period of funding cuts. Major grants in the range of \$400,000 could be given to a half dozen strategically selected organizations, or sustaining grants of \$50,000 could be used to help more than 50 organizations throughout the state. This basic bricks-and-mortar approach must underlie any arts stimulus initiative to ensure that the State's existing cultural institutions can properly manage the increased demands from the new programs and initiatives.
  6. Creative Infrastructure. This program area would target \$2 million to develop state-of-the-art systems for communications, documentation, and evaluation. We cannot afford to lose our past or ignore the future, yet many critical cultural archives and collections are in disrepair, most cultural institutions cannot afford to integrate modern technologies into their day-to-day operations, and public audiences and consumers remain unaware of the rich cultural offerings that surround them. These funds would be used to build a statewide registry of public art and artists, searchable and mappable via the internet to plan tours, conduct research, build collections, schedule events, call for work, conduct collaborative marketing, provide scholarly documentation, video and audio interviews, etc. The infrastructure will be made available to all cultural institutions in the State using affordable and sustainable business models such software as a service.
  7. Creative Exchange and Diplomacy. Echoing another plank of the Obama cultural platform that calls for "the kind of two-way cultural understanding that can break down the barriers that feed hatred and fear," this program would spend \$2 million enabling more than 30 artists to engage in international and domestic cultural interactions. Projects will include international exhibitions, lectures and performances, serving as cultural ambassadors especially in countries where the United States has been at odds. They would also include international collaborations with host-country artists to produce cultural events, and as well as projects that offer opportunities to the arts community abroad, making New Jersey a sought-after destination for artists and art students. A portion of the projects would also include funding for exchanges, transport and traveling shows with other part of the United States.
  8. Boost for Government Arts Agencies. Finally, the New Jersey State Council on the Art's share of the already determined increase in budget of the National Endowment for the Arts is less than \$1 million. The full one-percent allocation would increase this agency funding to more than \$6 million. The difference should be provided directly from the State's hotel/motel occupancy fee, which was established in 2003 precisely for this purpose.