



Indy Arts Leaders Meetup

FEBRUARY 10, 2026
Polklore Micro-Museum





Welcome

Thank you to our
host Harrison Center
and sponsor First Merchants!

Agenda

- 01 NETWORKING & REFRESHMENTS
- 02 WELCOME & HARRISON CENTER REMARKS
- 03 INDY ARTS COUNCIL UPDATES & 2026 PREVIEW
- 04 JILL ROBISCH, FIRST MERCHANTS NONPROFIT SERVICES
- 05 TOUR (OPTIONAL)





**HARRISON
CENTER +
POLKLORE
MICRO-MUSEUM**



Indy Arts Council Updates

Photo: Jes Nijjer

EVENT CATEGORY

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

What are you looking for?

Search

FILTER: Black History Month

By Date(s)

Submit an Event

FEB 5

10AM-8PM

Add to Calendar



FIRST THURSDAY AT NEWFIELDS

Celebrate the 50th anniversary of Black History Month.

FEB 7

2-3PM

Add to Calendar

HISTORY ON STAGE: A PRESENTATION FROM
SOJOURNER TRUTH & HARRIET TUBMAN

Experience a live performance from a pair of two historic women.

FEB 7

6-7PM

Add to Calendar

CONCERT AND LECTURE ON BLACK COMPOSERS AT
KVML

A conversation with local musicians on African American composers.

FEB 7

11-1PM

Add to Calendar



BLACK HISTORY FOR YOUTH

Black History, Self-Discovery, and Community hosted by Brother Jamaal & Desmond Hicks at the AMP.

FEB 11

7-8PM

Add to Calendar



BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

A tribute to resilience, creativity, and unity.

FEB 11

6:30PM

Add to Calendar

TPAC PERFORMS AT THE CITY OF LAWRENCE BLACK
HISTORY PROGRAM

Celebrate Black History Month with TPAC.

FEB 12



VIRTUAL AUTHOR TALK: MARI JOE - MERMAIDS, MEDICINE





Photo: Abdul-Shaheed

NCAA Men's Final Four

April 3 - 6, 2026, Indianapolis will host the largest celebration of college basketball in history, welcoming the 2026 NCAA® Men's Final Four®, the Division II Championship, Division III Championship, and the NIT Championship

- **SWISH Live Performances**
- **Sidewalk Galleries**
- **Arts & Culture Events**



Upcoming Grants

PROJECT GRANTS

ARTS IN PUBLIC SPACES

Application due **March 15**

ART & SOUL ACTIVATION GRANTS

Application due **March 1**



2026 Art & Soul Featured Artists

DR. AUSTIN DEAN ASHFORD



AUBONI ESSENCE



D'YSHE MANSFIELD



KENN.WAV



Reminders

AGP ANNUAL REPORT

Due March 31

PRO BONO LEGAL CONSULTATION

February 19 | 12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Registration required

Connect with Anna





Indy Arts Council History

Current Programs and Services

Grant Programs & Fellowships

- **Annual Grants Program**
- **Project Grants**
- **Art & Soul**
- **Creative Renewal
Arts Fellowship**
- **DeHaan Artist of Distinction**

Professional Development & Convenings

- **Playbook (Artist Prof. Dev)**
- **Arts Org Prof Dev**
- **Arts Leaders Meetups**
- **Arts Marketers Meetups**
- **Artist Convenings**

Public Art

- **Sidewalk Galleries**
- **Cultural District Grant**
- **Fever Performance Facility**
- **Public Art for Neighborhoods
Ordinance Change**



Current Programs and Services

Sector-wide Marketing

- [Explore Indy Arts Event Calendar](#)
- [Curated Guides and Micro-Campaigns](#)
- [Arts Marketers Convenings](#)
- [Building Email Distribution List](#)
- [Grassroots Strategies](#)

Indianapolis Artsgarden

- [Art & Soul Sundays](#)
- [Partnership Public Programs: Chreece, FLAVA FRESH !, Arte Mexicano en Indiana, and more](#)

Artist Services

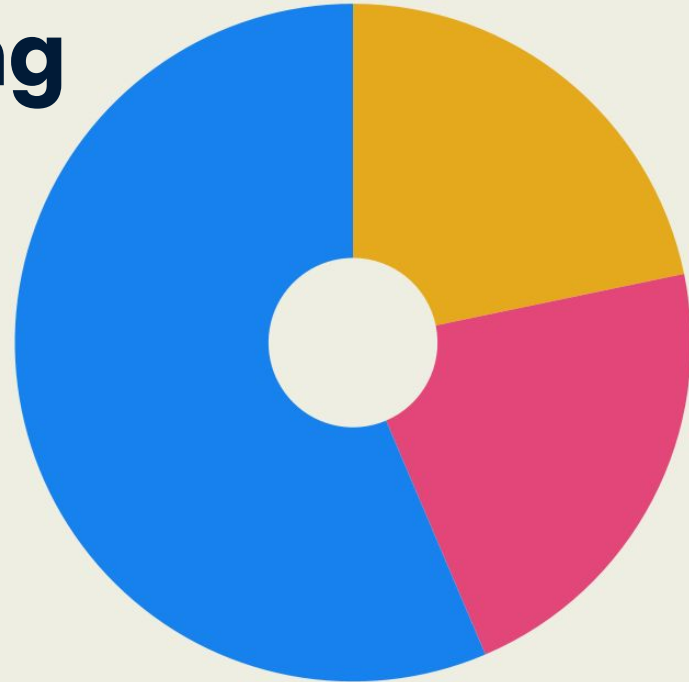
- [Gallery 924](#)
- [Welcome Race Fans](#)
- [Artist Opportunities](#)
- [Artist Directory](#)



Civic Arts Funding

2025 Funding Sources

\$2.3M TOTAL

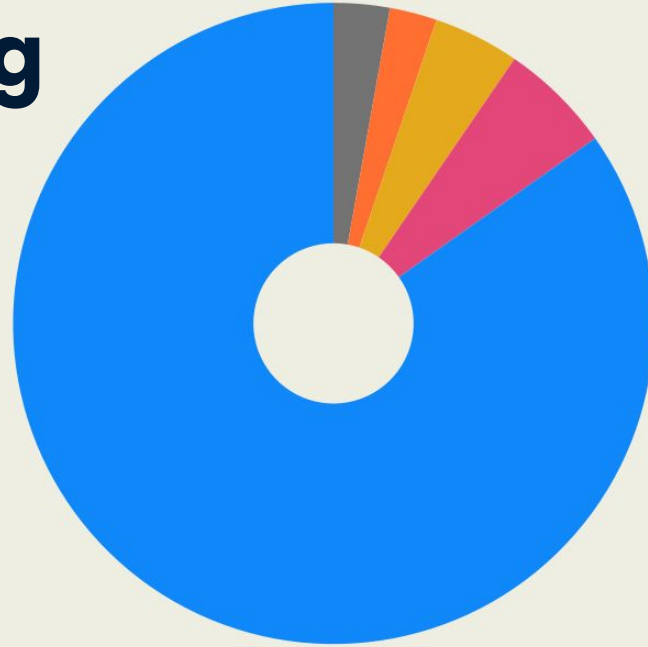


● Capital Improvement Board 21% ● Bond Bank 22% ● City via Parks Committee 56%



Civic Arts Funding 2025 Allocations

\$2.3M TOTAL



● Admin (City contract) 3% ● Project Grants 2% ● Sectorwide Marketing 4%
● Admin (non-City sources) 6% ● Annual Grants Program 85%



City Advocacy

INDY ARTS COUNCIL

THROUGH SUMMER:

- Individual meetings with councilors
- Meetings with Mayor re: 2027 budget
- Bond Bank and CIB presentations

AUGUST: Budget is introduced

SEPTEMBER: Public meeting and comment

OCTOBER: Budget is finalized

ARTS COMMUNITY

NOW & ALWAYS: Build relationships with your counselors through meetings, events, letters

TBD: Additional public comment opportunities

SEPTEMBER: Public meeting and comment



Thursday, January 15, 2026

BREAKING NEWS UPDATES IMPACTING THE ARTS & CULTURE

With current events impacting the arts and culture field, this page serves as a dedicated hub where we will compile the latest updates, ensuring you stay informed and engaged with the issues that matter most.

Legend:  Executive  Judicial
 Congressional  Advocacy



January 15, 2026

Appropriations Update

1/15/2026: The U.S. Senate passed a major FY26 minibus appropriations package containing funding for the Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy & Water Development; and Interior & Environment bills, following earlier passage in the U.S. House of Representatives. This bipartisan agreement now heads to President Trump for signature to be enacted into law.

Negotiations continue on the remaining FY26 appropriations bills, including State & Foreign Operations, Defense, and Labor-Health and Human Services, as Congress works to complete the full funding package and avoid a government shutdown **ahead of the January 30 deadline**. At this time, congressional leaders remain engaged in bipartisan discussions to keep the process moving forward.

▶ [Read more about this update.](#)
▶ [See the appropriations chart.](#)

January 7, 2026

Executive Update

1/7/2026: Presidential Memorandum entitled **"Withdrawing the United States from International Organizations, Conventions, and Treaties that Are Contrary to the Interests of the United States"** directs the federal executive agencies to withdraw from 66 international organizations and partnerships that are contrary to the interests of the United States. Specifically, the memorandum names the **International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA)**, an organization which

EXECUTIVE ORDERS & IMPACT ON THE ARTS FAQS

↓ DOWNLOAD

Americans for the Arts and the Arts Action Fund have prepared a detailed guide addressing key questions about President Trump's executive orders and their potential impact on the arts and culture. This resource will be updated regularly as new information emerges.





ARTS ORGANIZATION SERVICES



Photo: Emily Persic

Priorities

- Strengthen Funding Support
- Expand Professional Development
- Improve Visibility and Information
- Build Connections
- Address Health Insurance Challenges
- Address Space and Venue Needs



ACTION ITEM

Annual Grants Program annual reports are due March 31, 2026. Log in to indyarts.grantplatform.com to submit your report. The remainder of your 2025 award payment will be processed approximately 2-3 weeks after submission.

[Submit Report](#)



IRT production of *The Play that Goes Wrong* (Photo: Zach Rosing)

INDY ARTS COUNCIL UPDATES + MEETUPS



MARCH 12

Arts Marketers Meetup

Indianapolis Arts Garden

[LEARN MORE](#)



APRIL 7

Arts Leaders Meetup

Indiana Repertory Theatre

[LEARN MORE](#)



- **Grants**
- **Sector-Wide Marketing**
- **Operational Resources**
- **Professional Development**
- **Sharing Information**

2025 IMPACT

Sector-wide Marketing Highlights

12.8%

Monthly click-through rate average for Google ad campaigns indicating effective targeting and messaging

100+

Media coverage articles highlighting local artists, organizations, initiatives, and partnerships

\$167K

Invested in sector-wide marketing efforts to increase local and regional awareness of central Indiana artists and arts organizations

5M+

Combined views on social media platforms, with Instagram leading engagement and Facebook driving clicks

1.1M

Page views to IndyArts.org driven primarily by organic search and strong interest in opportunity and funding-related content



EVENTS

EXPLORE WHAT IS HAPPENING IN AND AROUND INDIANAPOLIS

What are you looking for?

Search

FILTER:

All Categories



By Date(s)



Submit an Event

Explore Events

FEATURED

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

More Events

Real Love Baby
- Reception





Freshbenies

ABOUT

A healthcare support platform. Indy Arts Council has created a group account for central Indiana's creative community.

- **\$20-30 / month**
- **Available for your entire household**
- **Coming April 2026**

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

Some amenities include:

- **24/7 virtual doctor visits**
- **Medical price estimates**
- **Prescription savings**
- **Dental & Vision discounts**

LEARN MORE

Affordable Healthcare Options for Artists & Nonprofits webinar hosted by the Indy Arts Council
March 2 | 6 p.m. | virtual

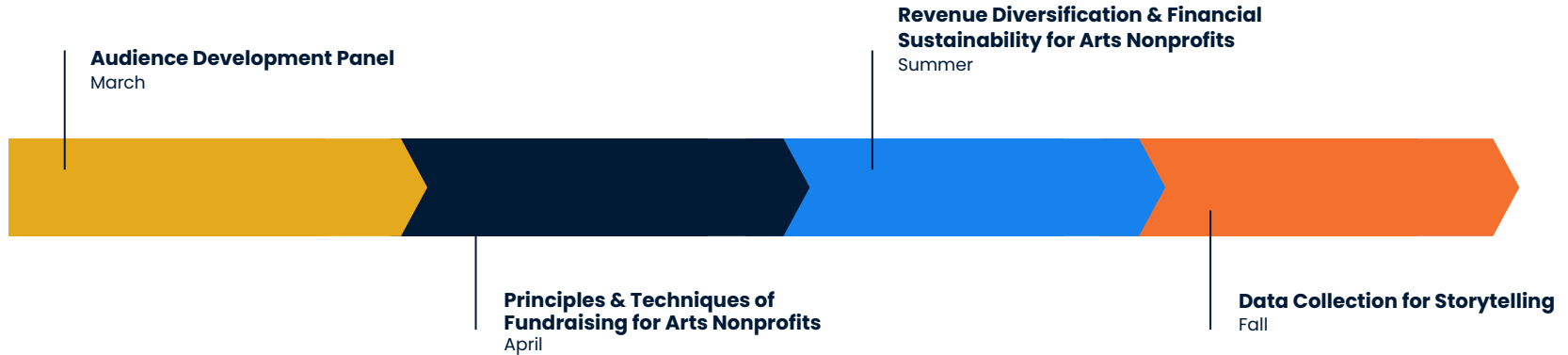
Affordable Health Insurance and Wellness Resources at Indy Arts Leader Meetup
April 7 | 10 a.m. | IRT



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ONGOING

Arts Marketer's Meetups

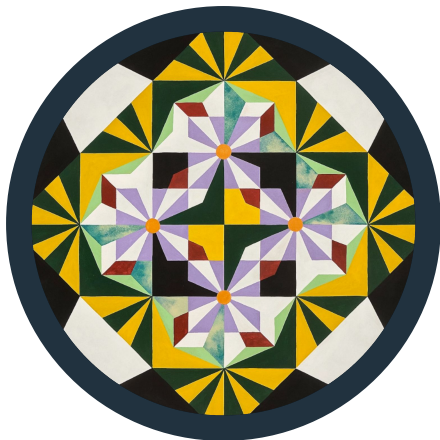


Save the Date

Principles & Techniques of Fundraising For Arts Nonprofits APRIL 13-15, 2026

- **\$150 per person (max 2 per organization)**
- **Financial assistance available**
- **CFRE credit available**





Arts Leaders Meetups

Dates

- **April 7 | Indiana Repertory Theatre**
Affordable Health Insurance and Wellness Resources
- **June 9 | Hendricks Live!**
Affinity Groups
- **August 11 | Indy Ballet**
DEAI Updates from Ice Miller
- **October 6 | IF Theatre**
Affinity Groups
- **December 8 | 10 East Arts**
City of Indianapolis' Equity Priority

Format

- Networking
- Indy Arts Updates
- Guest Speaker or Affinity Groups





Jill Robisch First Merchants Nonprofit Services

Photo: Mike Lee Productions



First Merchants

Helping you prosper

NONPROFITS DESERVE MORE THAN A BANK

February 2026

NONPROFITS DESERVE MORE THAN A BANK

They Need a Partner Who Helps Them Prosper

Risk Management Support

We provide tools at a significantly reduced cost to mitigate fraud and create efficiencies, protecting arts organizations' financial health and trust.

Investment in Nonprofit Leaders

Complimentary Nonprofit Training Series to empower leaders and strengthen organizational impact.

Financial Wellness

We empower nonprofit employees, volunteers, and community members with tools to improve financial wellness.



1. RISK MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

NONPROFIT FRAUD TRENDS

Escalating Fraud Risks

Nonprofits face rising fraud threats including cybercrime, internal vulnerabilities, and weak financial controls.

Payment Method Vulnerabilities

Checks and Business Email Compromise are the primary fraud targets, with ACH credits increasingly vulnerable.

Internal Fraud Concerns

Smaller nonprofits lack segregation of duties, making them more vulnerable.

Proactive Safeguarding Strategies

Nonprofits must adopt strong controls and banking partnerships to protect mission-critical resources.

FRAUD PREVENTION TOOLS

Positive Pay for Check Fraud

Positive Pay matches issued checks with those presented, preventing check fraud effectively for nonprofits.

ACH Filtering and Blocking

ACH filtering tools help control electronic withdrawals, reducing unauthorized transaction risks significantly.

ACH and Dual Approval Workflow

Submitting payments via ACH is the safest way to pay your vendors. It is important that ACH transactions require dual control and no single person can authorize fund releases alone.

Real-Time Monitoring & Education

Alerts help detect fraud patterns early. We educate nonprofits on evolving scams and tactics.



2. INVESTING IN NONPROFIT LEADERS

2026 Nonprofit Training Series

Gain actionable insights from experts to strengthen your organization's impact and sustainability

- 
- | | | |
|------------------|---|---------------------|
| Session 1 | Leading Practices in Strategic Planning | March 3 |
| Session 2 | Building Corporate Partnerships | May 12 |
| Session 3 | Fundraising Essentials for Board Members | September 15 |
| Session 4 | Creating Competitive Grant Proposals | November 10 |

Led by Hedges, a nonprofit consulting firm with decades of nonprofit expertise
Virtual Format | 90 Minute Sessions | 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM EST
Registration is complimentary and required for each session

For more information, contact Jill Robisch, Director of Nonprofit Services JRobisch@firstmerchants.com.



3. FINANCIAL WELLNESS

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYEE FINANCIAL WELLNESS

Impact of Financial Stress

Financial stress causes reduced concentration, absenteeism, and fatigue, limiting employee effectiveness in arts organizations.

Benefits of Financial Wellness

Financially secure employees perform better, collaborate more effectively, and engage deeply with community and mission.

Retention and Continuity

Supporting financial wellness reduces turnover costs and preserves critical institutional knowledge in arts nonprofits.

Strategic Mission Investment

Investing in employee financial wellness strengthens mission delivery, innovation, and organizational resilience.



EMPLOYEE FINANCIAL WELLNESS

Enrich, a personal finance platform provided by First Merchants Bank.



Importance of Employee Financial Wellness

Financial well-being is crucial for employee resilience and overall organizational health in arts nonprofits.

Enrich Platform Features

Enrich provides budgeting tools, debt reduction strategies, personalized assessments, and unbiased financial education.

Benefits to Arts Organizations

Financially secure employees show higher engagement, lower burnout, and better retention supporting mission delivery.

Holistic Staff Care Commitment

Offering Enrich demonstrates commitment to both artistic excellence and comprehensive employee well-being.

[Enrich: Financial Wellness](#)

THANK YOU

Jill Robisch

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First Vice President

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317.258.5728 cell



Thank you!

10–11:30 AM | April 7

Indiana Repertory Theatre

