

# WESTAF

The Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF) is a nonprofit arts organization that weaves together technology, thought leadership and innovation to energize, network, and grow funding for public sector arts agencies. Founded in 1974 and located in Denver, WESTAF is governed by a 22-member board of trustees and serves the largest constituent territory of the six U.S. regional arts organizations and includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai'i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

WESTAF serves state arts agencies, arts organizations, and artists in their quest to serve diverse audiences and enrich the lives of local communities. As one of six regional arts organizations in the United States, WESTAF provides advocacy, policy, arts programming, technology services, grantmaking, and professional development services to the 13 state arts agencies in its region. WESTAF encourages the creative advancement and preservation of the arts regionally, and through national networks and alliances.

## Social Responsibility and Inclusion

WESTAF's 10-year vision and strategic plan articulates goals and metrics related to increasing opportunities, benefits, and resources for historically underrepresented communities in a manner that results in quantifiable and systemic change. Our Social Responsibility & Inclusion division plays a primary role in achieving these goals with a focus on leadership development, grantmaking, thought leadership, and activation of WESTAF's diverse and expansive network of allies and partners. Resulting programs and initiatives reflect a range of equity-centered learning experiences and funding opportunities that connect and inspire leaders and communities to build a more inclusive arts and culture sector, strengthen the arts field, and catalyze change.

## Grants

WESTAF's 25-year-old competitive grant program, TourWest, provides grants of up to \$2,500 to arts and community organizations for the presentation of out-of-state touring performers and literary artists. Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to high artistic quality, collaboration and block booking, the presentation of programs to underserved communities, audience development, and community participation.

## Leaders of Color

Since 2010, WESTAF's Emerging Leaders of Color (ELC) program has been attracting, training, networking, and promoting a new generation of diverse arts leaders. Since its inception, ELC has reached 90 arts leaders from the 13 WESTAF-region states. Seven separate cohorts have included individuals who self-identify as Asian American/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, African American/Black, Latinx/Chicanx, Native American/Alaska Native, and/or Multiracial/-ethnic.

## Alliances, Advocacy, and Policy

WESTAF's Alliances, Advocacy, and Policy division leads the organization's efforts to strengthen advocacy for the arts at local, state, and national levels, support state arts agencies across 13 states in the West, and facilitate regional and national dialogue on contemporary policy issues that affect the arts. These efforts include conducting arts policy research, delivering professional development programs for state arts agencies, supporting the work of arts advocates, and convening thought leaders in the field. The division connects, coordinates, and mobilizes a western network of artists, administrators, public officials, and influencers within and outside the arts field to build awareness of arts-related issues to drive legislation and policy.

### Advocacy

WESTAF's advocacy work includes providing funding to support advocacy efforts on behalf of the state arts agencies in the region. WESTAF also recently launched a network of state arts advocacy leaders in the West to connect and share best practices. In addition, WESTAF has regularly convened arts leaders from the region in Washington, D.C. to meet with members of Congress and their staffs, discuss the status and future prospects for federal arts support, and consider opportunities for WESTAF trustees to generate more state government support for the work of state arts agencies.

### Convenings

WESTAF regularly convenes experts and leaders from a variety of fields to address critical issues that affect arts and culture and to provide opportunities for practitioners and thinkers in the region to reflect on issues particular to the West while considering a national context.

### Publications

WESTAF maintains an extensive archive of publications dating back to 1976 including proceedings, position papers, and economic impact studies from decades of research projects benefiting the state arts agencies of the West and the broader arts community.

## Technology

An experienced technology developer, WESTAF manages five distinct online tools built for the arts:

[Creative Vitality™ Suite](#) (CVSuite™), a research-based economic development tool that offers high quality creative economy data and reporting

[Public Art Archive™](#) (PAA™), an online and mobile database of completed public artworks that provides a suite of collection-management tools for public artists and organizations

[GO Smart™](#), a time-saving, affordable, and easy-to-use online grants management system for the arts

[CallforEntry.org™](#) (CaFÉ™), the leading call-for-entry application and adjudication system for visual and public art

[ZAPApplication.org®](#) (ZAPP®), the premier online application system used by artists and art fairs and festivals