

New York State Council on the Arts

Council Meeting Minutes

March 27, 2025 3:00PM-4:45 PM

Held at the NYSCA Office: 411 Fifth Avenue, Suite 700, New York, NY 10016

Council Member Present:

Monica Angle, Larry Cook, Aaron Flagg, Amy Hau, Brian Higgins, Janet Langsam, Eric Latzky, James Lemons, Mino Lora, David Alan Miller, Nazee Moinian, Peter Pockriss, Monica Ramirez-Montagut, Adriana Trigiani, Patrick Willingham.

In-person quorum present: Yes

NYSCA Staff in attendance:

Erika Mallin, Executive Director, NYSCA

Megan White, Deputy Director of Programs, NYSCA

Noah Brick, General Counsel, NYSCA

Katie Steger, Program Director of Capital Projects, NYSCA

Council Member Eric Latzky was designated by Executive Chamber to oversee the procedural elements of the meeting.

Before the meeting was formally called to order, NYSCA General Counsel Noah Brick conducted a roll call of present Council members. The meeting of the NYSCA Council was called to order at approximately 3:00 PM by Council Member Eric Latzky.

Executive Director Welcome

Erika Mallin (Executive Director): Thank you, ERIC, and thank you to our Council Members for joining us today - welcome all.

At today's meeting, our final for Fiscal Year 2025, Council will review and vote on the FY2025 Capital Project grant recommendations, the FY2025 Capital Panelist Roster, the FY2025 Regrant Administrative Funds, and the FY2025 Appeals panel determinations. The materials for today's meeting were sent to Council on March 20, 2025.

CAPITAL FUNDING

We are immensely grateful to Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature for their FY2025 Capital Appropriation of \$80 million. The demand for capital funding is high - NYSCA received over 260 capital applications, representing over \$200 million in total request amounts. Many arts organizations, particularly small organizations and organizations outside of New York City, do not have access to these critical dollars outside of state funding.

Supporting capital projects ensures the longevity of our vital cultural institutions, creates jobs, establishes new tourism destinations, and has a compounded economic effect on local businesses and overall health of our communities across our state.

By being proactive in our field, just this year alone we have made innovative changes to expand access to capital improvement grants to address every day, but critically needed, facilities improvements to keep doors open.

Proud to share some recently completed projects, including the Corning Museum of Glass, the Reg Lenna (Rej Len-ay) Center for the Arts in Western NY, the Bushwick Starr in Brooklyn, and Historic Saranac Lake in North Country.

For the record, The FY2025 Capital Project Fund application portal launched on September 25, 2024, and closed January 14, 2025. I'd like to recognize the phenomenal work of our Capital Projects team, Program Director Katie Steger and Program Officer Lindsay Turley, for their oversight and stewardship of this program, and our operations team, led by Karen Welch, including Will McDermott, Gabi Nail, Claudine Lee, and Ian Byrne, for their work throughout the application and panel review process.

I would also like to thank the FY2025 capital panelists, who represented 7 out of 10 regions of the state, for their time and commitment to this most important part of our grant making process.

BUDGET HEARINGS AND TESTIMONY

As an update from our last meeting, in February I delivered budget testimony before the legislative fiscal committees.

I was proud to speak on the excellent work of our agency over the last year, the impact of a well-funded arts ecosystem, and how our work ensures:

- **That organizations of all budget sizes thrive**, with half of our FY25 grantees having budgets under \$500,000, and 84% under \$1 million.
- **That support is broad and inclusive:** Annually, NYSCA supports over 500 new artists across artistic disciplines, and in 2025, over 100 organizations were first-time NYSCA grantees.
- **That we are investing in our local communities:** Our successful Statewide Community Regrant program expands NYSCA's reach, promotes local decision making, and empowers over 1,300 hyper-local artists and organizations.
- **That we are helping to develop new artistic work:** NYSCA invested \$2 million to secure affordable creative spaces across 61 sites, ensuring that artists have space to create and innovate.
- **That we are doing outreach to expand access to our dollars:** this year alone, our technical assistance webinars and office hours reached over 5,600 people.
- **That the arts remain an Economic powerhouse and deliver a robust return:** contributing over \$151 billion back to New York State – more than the retail, construction, agriculture, or transportation sectors.

We are grateful for the proposed increases to our grantmaking by the Governor and Legislature, and we will inform Council when the final budget is delivered. At this time, I welcome Deputy Director of Programs, Megan White, for our next few items of business.

FY2025 Appeal Panel Determination Review

Megan White (Deputy Director of Programs): For our first order of business, we will review the FY2025 Appeals Panel determinations. The appeals memo can be found on pages 2-3 in the packet on your iPad. As

part of NYSCA's four-step approval process, an applicant may appeal the Council's funding decision. The procedure for appeals is set forth in Part 6401 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations.

Valid grounds for appeal are limited to:

1. Nonpresentation of information: Information known to the Council staff prior to the Council's decision that was not presented and that might have altered the decision;
2. Misrepresentation of information: Information known to the Council staff prior to the Council's decision that was changed in its presentation and that, if presented differently, might have altered the decision;
3. Improper procedure: Contention by the applicant that: 1) the review of the funding request by the appropriate advisory panel was biased; 2) the decision by the Council was arbitrary and capricious.

Of the 2,700 FY2025 applications, NYSCA received 11 funding determination appeals. The Appeals Panel, comprised of panelists that served on the FY2025 panels, held a public meeting at NYSCA's offices on Thursday, March 6, 2025.

After presentation of the grounds, review of the procedure and materials, and an extensive discussion, 9 appeals were denied, and 2 appeals were upheld.

It is important to note that a denied appeal does not affect an organization's application for the following year – appellants are welcome to submit a request to NYSCA in the subsequent year without penalty. In the event that an appeal is upheld, it is not a guarantee of funding. Upheld appeals go back to panel to be reviewed again' as if it were a new request.

Each of you received a copy of a memo that shared the information from the appeals meeting outlining the appellants, their grounds for appeal, and the results. The Council must vote today to concur with the appeals panel's recommendations on the appeals denials for the FY2025 appeal process to be concluded. The Council will vote on the upheld appeals at our November Council Meeting after they have gone through the FY2026 panel review process.

A copy of the FY2025 Appeals Panel Memo can be viewed, [here](#).

FY2025 Panelist Rosters Review

Megan White (Deputy Director of Programs): For our next order of business, we will move to the FY2025 Capital Panelist Roster, which can be found on pages 4-6 in your meeting packet.

Capital projects applications are complex collections of information about the technical feasibility, financial soundness, and direct community benefit of proposed capital improvements.

To adequately evaluate these proposals, we rely heavily on the technical and field expertise of a diverse group of practitioners. Each panel is composed of 5-7 individuals with expertise in architecture, engineering, nonprofit finance, nonprofit management (with experience leading a capital project), technical production and theatrical equipment, historic preservation, and construction management. Their collective, complimentary skillsets foster a rigorous and thoughtful review of every application we receive.

This year, we engaged 40 panelists (18 new, 22 returning) representing 7 regions of the state, in 6 separate review panels of 5-8 reviewers. Panelists reviewed and scored applications in advance, and each of the panels convened for a zoom meeting. During the meetings, applications were discussed in detail and panelists had the opportunity to adjust their scores based on the conversation. Panel scores and comments were used to inform the list of recommendations that Council is considering today.

A reminder that we will vote to ratify the panelist rosters following our review of the FY25 Capital grant recommendations.

A copy of the FY2025 Capital Projects panelist roster recommendations can be viewed, [here](#).

Executive Session

A motion is made and seconded to enter into Executive Session per Section 105(1)(f) of the Open Meetings Law to discuss: "...the ... financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation." The meeting continues in Executive Session for Council members and staff until 4:30PM.

Return to Public Session

Eric Latzky (Council Member): Welcome back to the public portion of the Council meeting for the New York State Council on the Arts. I am Council Member Eric Latzky. Thank you all for joining us. To remind all in attendance; this is a public meeting that is being recorded.

At the request Council Member Latzky, a motion is made and seconded to ratify the FY2025 Capital Panelist Rosters. The motion is unanimously approved by all present Council Members.

At the request of Council Member Latzky, a motion is made and seconded to approve the FY2025 Capital Project Grants, FY2025 Re-grants and Services Administrative Funds, and the FY2025 Appeals Panel Determinations.

General Counsel Noah Brick notes the following conflicts for the record:

| Organization | Council Member Conflicts |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Bethany Arts Community | Peter Pockriss |
| Earlville Opera House | Janet Langsam |
| Historic Hudson Valley | Peter Pockriss |
| Huntington Arts Council | Janet Langsam |
| The Julliard School | Aaron Flagg |
| New York Shakespeare Festival dba The Public Theater | Patrick Willingham |
| Roxbury Arts Group Inc. | Janet Langsam |
| Art Omi | Monica Ramirez-Montagut |

No additional conflicts are noted by the Council. The motion to approve the FY2025 Capital Project Grants, FY2025 Re-grants and Services Administrative Funds, and the FY2025 Appeals Panel Determinations is unanimously approved by Council Members.

Adjourn

Erika Mallin (Executive Director): Thank you, all! And a special thank you to Council Member ERIC LATZKY for overseeing the procedural elements of this meeting!

Today, the NYSCA Council has approved over \$80 million in vital capital funding – bringing our FY2025 funding to \$162 million across 10 regions and 62 counties. We thank Governor Hochul and our State Legislators who continue to advocate for the arts and culture sector and who made this funding possible.

In doing our civic duty, we ensure that these public dollars have lasting impact in communities across our State. These funds not only bolster our economy, but they will also strengthen the arts and culture sector and serve all New Yorkers and our visitors.

Our FY2026 Council meeting schedule will be finalized over the coming weeks, and we anticipate holding meetings in November 2025 and March 2026.

At the request Council Member Eric Latzky, a motion for the Council to adjourn the meeting is made and seconded. The motion carries unanimously by the Council members. Meeting adjourns at 4:45PM.

End of Council Meeting Minutes.

All grants approved at this meeting will be made available on the NYSCA [website](#).