

South Carolina Arts Commission

House Ways and Means
Economic Development Subcommittee

FY 2026-27 Budget Hearing

SOUTHCAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION*

Agency Attendees

- David Platts, Executive Director
- Ashley Brown, Senior Deputy Director
- Ce Scott-Fitts, Deputy Director
- Kimberly Washburn Motte, Deputy Director
- Angela Brewbaker, Finance Director

Key Officials – Board of Commissioners

Chairperson

- Flavia Harton, Greenville

At Large Members

- Heidi Carey, Columbia
- David Hodges, Columbia
- Barbara Nwokike, Charleston
- Russell “Rip” Parks, Greenville
- Jessica Rourke, Columbia
- Linda C. Stern, Columbia
- Danielle Thompson, Sumter
- Bhavna Vasudeva, Columbia

Agency Mission

The mission of the South Carolina Arts Commission is to expand access to the arts and foster creativity for all South Carolinians.

The South Carolina Arts Commission

- is the only state organization charged with supporting and providing leadership for the arts statewide.
- works to ensure that all S.C. citizens and visitors benefit from opportunities for rewarding arts experiences.

Major Program Areas

- **Arts Learning** – to establish the arts as an integral part of South Carolina's educational systems and the lifelong learning process of our citizens.
- **Arts Industry** – to stimulate the development of South Carolina's arts resources and organizations and promote creative partnerships to improve the quality of lives, preserve cultural heritage, and enhance economic growth.
- **Artist Development** – to encourage, nurture and support the artistic growth and the personal and economic well-being of South Carolina's artists.

Economic Impact of the Arts

- The most recent *Economic Impact of the Arts Study* documents an annual \$14.1 billion impact on the state's economy by the arts-related economic cluster.
- 123,550 creative sector jobs generate \$5.7 billion in wages and salaries and an estimated annual tax revenue of \$360.2 million for the state of South Carolina.
- The creative economy in South Carolina is growing – the \$14.1 billion impact is a 45 percent increase from the 2018 study figure of \$9.7 billion.

FY2025 Major Accomplishments

- SCAC placed grants in all 46 counties, awarding \$12.5 million through 676 grants to support community arts activities, help artists grow sustainable careers, and increase arts learning opportunities for students through school-based arts programs.
- Creative Careers Studio was launched, a website for high school and college students that want to explore a career in the arts. The site can also be used by teachers, school administrators and counselors, and young professionals looking to change careers.

FY2025 Major Accomplishments, cont.

- Year Three of the *Arts For All* grant enabled 38 organizations to increase accessibility to the arts for individuals with disabilities. This grant has led to the launch of *Barrier Free Arts SC* which includes a learning cohort for arts organizations that want to make their spaces more accessible.
- The Creative Arts Therapy partnership with MUSC continued with it's third year, allowing MUSC to hire two full time arts therapists to work in two Arts Hub regions – the Pee Dee/Grand Strand and the Lowcountry.
- SCAC established a presence in five Arts Hubs regions outside of the Midlands to allow for the Arts Commission to expand the agency's capacity to deliver on identified priorities and allow SCAC employees to live and work throughout the state.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION*

FY25 Impact * * * * *

\$12,541,082

distributed through
674 grants

Scan for our
interactive impact
dashboard



Artist Development

Grants Programs

Arts Industry

Grants Programs

Arts Learning/Arts Grow SC

Grants Programs

Arts in Basic Curriculum (ABC) Institute sites

Folklife & Traditional Arts

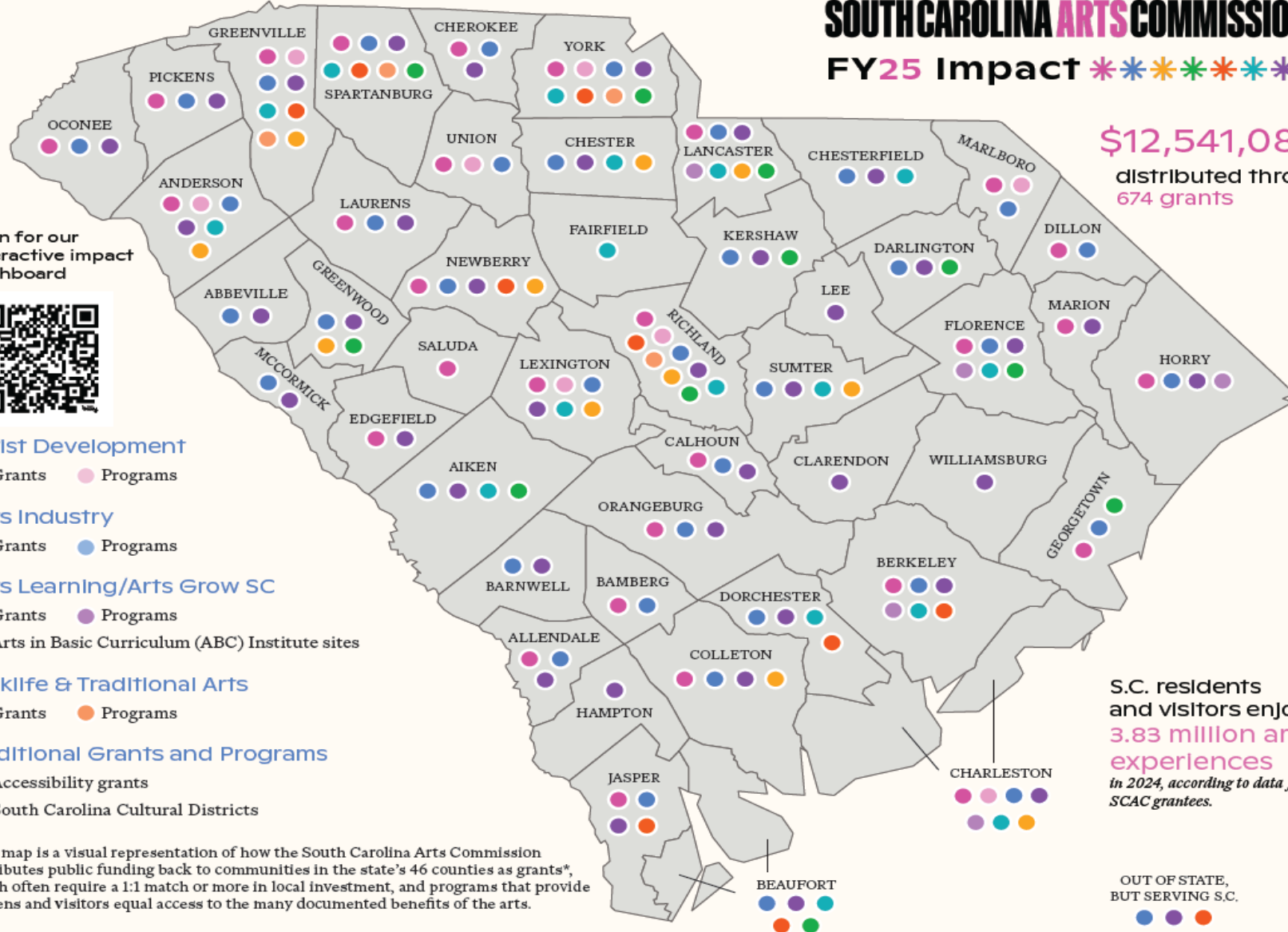
Grants Programs

Additional Grants and Programs

Accessibility grants

South Carolina Cultural Districts

This map is a visual representation of how the South Carolina Arts Commission distributes public funding back to communities in the state's 46 counties as grants*, which often require a 1:1 match or more in local investment, and programs that provide citizens and visitors equal access to the many documented benefits of the arts.



S.C. residents
and visitors enjoyed
**3.83 million arts
experiences**
in 2024, according to data from
SCAC grantees.

OUT OF STATE,
BUT SERVING S.C.



Recurring Budget Request – Priority 1

- **\$3,000,000 in new recurring funds**
 - \$2,500,000 for the **Arts Industry Operating Support** grant category
 - \$500,000 for **Creative Careers Studio** website and programming
- \$2,500,000 in new recurring funds will increase capacity for accepting new applicants for the **Arts Industry Operating Support** grant category while sustaining funding for current grantees.
- FY25 operating support grants
 - \$3.8 million awarded to 200 organizations
 - 12 new grantees added since FY24
 - 35 additional organizations are interested in applying for operating support
- Without additional funds, operating support will remain flat for current grantees and new applicants cannot be accepted.

Recurring Budget Request – Priority 1, cont.

- **\$500,000** in new recurring funds to support the **Creative Careers Studio** website and programming.
- Creative Careers Studio was launched in FY25 as a resource for high school and college students who want to explore a career in the arts. The site can also be used by educators, parents, young professionals, and workforce development partners. FY26 programming includes college and career fairs, arts industry field trips, and an arts professionals speaker's bureau for classroom teachers.
- A companion YouTube channel features videos of creative professionals working in fields such as the auto industry and product development. These videos were produced in partnership with S.C. Future Makers and the S.C. Manufacturers Alliance to show students how creativity and the arts play a vital role in advanced manufacturing and technology careers.

Recurring Budget Request – Priority 2

- **\$100,000** in new recurring funds to cover increased IT costs associated with hardware, software, and network support from the Dept. of Admin's Shared Services and for new Arts Hub Region offices.
 - \$40,000 to cover the annual increase in support from IT Shared Services.
 - \$60,000 for annual costs associated with hardware, software, licenses, and related technology for six Arts Hub Region offices across the state.
- In April 2025, DTO alerted state agencies of an impending Shared Services price increase. The Arts Commission's annual cost will increase from \$65,811 to approximately \$97,841 beginning July 1, 2026.
- SCAC is opening six Arts Hub Region offices around the state. The offices will be located in existing SCAC partner spaces, but each office will need technology such as laptops, copiers, printers, and software.

Financial Update

2024-2025		
	Appropriations	Expenses
General Funds (Recurring)	\$ 10,050,618	\$ 9,579,253
General Funds (Non-Recurring)	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 1,450,923
Carried forward from FY2024 (recurring)	\$ 821,085	\$ 821,085
Carried forward from FY2024 (non-recurring)	\$ 5,153,304	\$ 1,169,725
General Funds:	\$ 18,025,007	\$ 13,020,987
EIA Funds from Department of Education	\$ 1,170,000	\$ 459,820
EIA Carryforward from FY2024	\$ 941,767	\$ 941,767
Total EIA:	\$ 2,111,767	\$ 1,401,587
Federal Funds	\$ 1,335,641	\$ 1,107,837
Other Funds	\$ 148,707	\$ 62,043
Total:	\$ 21,621,122	\$ 15,592,454
2025-2026		
	Appropriations	Expenses (as of 12.31.2025)
General Funds (Recurring)	\$ 10,550,618	\$ 5,815,056
General Funds (Non-Recurring)	\$ -	\$ -
Carried forward from FY2025 (Recurring)	\$ 471,365	\$ -
Carried forward from FY2025 (Non-Recurring)	\$ 4,695,396	\$ 72,839
General Funds:	\$ 15,717,379	\$ 5,887,895
EIA Funds from Department of Education	\$ 1,170,000	\$ 86,617
EIA Carryforward from FY2025	\$ 710,179	\$ -
Total EIA:	\$ 1,880,179	\$ 86,617
Federal Funds	\$ 1,287,207	\$ 516,829
Other Funds	\$ 148,707	\$ 3,625
Total:	\$ 19,033,472	\$ 6,494,966

FTE Information

As of January 5, 2026

- Authorized – 39.5
- Filled – 24
- Vacant – 15.5