



LINCOLN **ARTS** 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



ABOUT

Our Mission

Championing the arts, connecting people, changing lives—that's what we do.

Lincoln Arts is here to serve the arts community of Nebraska's capital and to help the arts serve the greater community. Thanks to support from funders like you, we continue to bring together people and the arts. Read on to learn how Lincoln Arts has continued to empower Lincoln's arts scene through programming, events, advocacy efforts, and more in 2023.

FUNDING THE ARTS

Where We Invest

direct payments to artists & arts organizations

29%

other costs

23%

48%

direct programming costs

Sources of Support

earned income

15%

corporate support

13%

individual donations

10%

38%

grants

24%

public support



Funders

Lincoln Arts would like to express our sincerest gratitude to the following funders for their generous support for the 2022-2023 fiscal year:

Abel Foundation	Lincoln Community Foundation
Acklie Charitable Foundation	Lincoln Parks Foundation
Ameritas	Nebraska Arts Council
John & Catherine Angle Charitable Trust	Nebraska Cultural Endowment
Hugo A. & Thelma Aspegren Charitable Trust	Nebraska Tourism Commission
City of Lincoln	Olsson Family Foundation
Cooper Foundation	Grace S. Pfister Foundation
DF Dillon Foundation	Rogers Foundation
Dolezal Family Foundation	Lee & Debbie Stuart Family Foundation
Kenneth J. Good Endowment	Terpstra Foundation
Pearle Francis Finigan Foundation	Mary F. Tous Charitable Foundation
Hoegemeyer Family Foundation	Union Bank & Trust
Richard P. & Laurine Kimmel Charitable Foundation	Visit Lincoln
Krieger Family Foundation	Woods Charitable Fund, Inc.
	Pace Woods Foundation

Ghost Light Society Members

Thank you to the following Ghost Light Society members of 2023 for supporting the arts in Lincoln by investing \$1,000 or more annually into Lincoln Arts:

Pat & Ellen Beans	Adam & Andrea Letheby
Margaret Berry	Yvonne Norton Leung & Kam Ching Leung
Robert & Jo Anne Bettenhausen	Judy Maupin
Jim & Judy Cada	Jeffery & Sarah Peetz
Mary & Doug Campbell	Rhonda Seacrest
John Casey	Larry Small
Donna Dahlsten	Susan Sehnert Stuart
Karen Gagner	Jean & Lavonne Uffelman
Scott & Stephanie Hatfield	Chris & Art Zygielbaum
Michael James & Linda Esterling	

ARTS ACCESS

upstArt Arts Access program

Lincoln Arts' upstArt program continues to connect under-resourced groups—including youth, new Americans, individuals with developmental disabilities, those impacted by the justice system, and others—with enriching arts opportunities through afterschool programs, community-wide experiences, public arts projects, and more, so that the arts remain truly accessible to all.

In 2023, our upstArt programming embodied that goal by providing access via 100 arts projects and programs to a variety of populations throughout Lincoln, including Lincoln Public Schools students, residents of rehabilitation centers, and individuals served by numerous human service organizations like Autism Family Network and CEDARS.



54
teaching artists

100
projects

111
project partners



~8,000
participants served

~1,200
hours of instruction

~45,000
hours of arts interaction





2
 projects serving
 older adults



5
 projects serving
 youth

2
 projects serving local
 neighborhoods



upstArt Arts Access Grant program

Lincoln Arts' upstArt Arts Access Grant program provides arts and human service organizations in our community with funding to support arts programming and outreach projects for under-resourced populations. As part of a recent expansion, the upstArt Grant program awarded \$40,000 to arts and human service organizations. This expansion reflects upstArt's focus on collaborations between the arts and human service communities to bring arts opportunities to those with limited access to the arts, such as older adults and new Americans.

5
 projects serving
 new Americans



1
 project serving
 people with
 substance abuse
 disorder



3
 projects serving
 people with
 developmental
 disabilities



ARTS EVENTS

Lincoln Arts Festival

In its 22nd year, the Lincoln Arts Festival (LAF) continued to play a pivotal role in bolstering the economic vitality of downtown Lincoln. Hosted on Canopy Street and the Railyard, the event featured 79 artists, offering a prominent platform for local emerging talents and established artists nationwide to showcase and sell their artwork. Additional collaborations with more than 20 artist partners, performers, and arts organizations broadened the scope of creative entertainment offered at LAF. The seamless integration of art commerce, live music, and family-friendly interactive activities attracted over 15,000 attendees, showcasing a diverse array of artistic works, and fueling enthusiasm for the arts across all age groups and demographics. The combined efforts in curation and targeted marketing strategies resulted in an estimated \$175,000 in art sales, highlighting the Festival's economic impact on the City of Lincoln.



79
selling artists

~\$175,000+
made in art sales

15,000+
attendees

10
emerging artists



22
activity partners





3
concerts

700+
attendees

3
activity partners

1,500
hours of arts
interaction



Art Vibes, Park Sounds

In partnership with the Lincoln Parks Foundation, Lincoln Arts connected local bands, artists, and arts organizations at several Lincoln parks throughout August to bring accessible musical experiences to the residents of local neighborhoods, creating a fun, family-friendly atmosphere for all in attendance.

Mayor's Arts Awards

The Mayor's Arts Awards honors and celebrates all who have made impact through the arts and/or on the arts community through education, behind-the-scenes support, generous financial contributions, and more. The 45th annual Mayor's Arts Awards celebrated 13 local artists, arts organizations, and creative project leaders. Winners were honored with awards designed by ceramicist—and Lincoln Arts Festival Mayor's Choice Award winner—Adria Chilcote. Meanwhile, attendees enjoyed culinary delights, an art auction made up of works from Lincoln Arts Festival artists, and live music—featuring a solo performance from winner Daniel Martinez and a trio ensemble comprised of winners Nicholas Li, Ed Polochick, and Clark Potter.



ARTS ADVOCACY

Arts & Economic Prosperity (AEP6) Study

From June 2022 to June 2023, Lincoln Arts collected 817 surveys at nonprofit arts and culture events throughout Lincoln—conducted in partnership with Americans for the Arts—as part of the sixth national Arts & Economic Prosperity (AEP6) study, designed to gauge the economic and social impact of arts event-related spending in our community.

Results released in October 2023 demonstrated that Lincoln's nonprofit arts and culture industry had generated \$97.4 million in economic activity in 2022. That activity—arts event-related spending, jobs, and government revenue—means the arts continue to play a critical role in driving Lincoln's economy, empowering local artists, and providing experiences that enrich and connect our community.

\$97.4M

in economic activity caused by Lincoln's nonprofit arts & culture industry

\$54.5M

in spending by Lincoln's nonprofit arts & culture organizations

\$42.9M

in event-related spending by audiences

94%

of residents feel pride toward the arts & culture scene of Lincoln

89%

of locals value the arts and agree they would feel a sense of loss without local arts events

\$27.85

spent on average per person per arts & culture event after the cost of admission

~1,800

jobs supported by arts and culture event-related spending

\$14.1M

total in government revenue at the local, state, and federal levels

\$50.3M

household income paid

ARTS INDUSTRY

Emerging Artist program

Empowering new creatives to succeed in the business of art, Lincoln Arts' Emerging Artist program expanded in 2023 to include Artist INC, a program of the Mid-America Arts Alliance, a career-focused training program for artists. Together, Lincoln Arts and Mid-America Arts Alliance continue to equip artists with the educational materials, mentorship, and avenues they need to thrive as professional artists.

50+
activity hours



500+
hours of program
interaction



50
program
participants



Artscene

To further amplify our impact, Lincoln Arts is collaborating with Don't Panic Labs to develop a centralized hub consolidating arts events, opportunities, and jobs. This platform is envisioned as a comprehensive resource, connecting artists, venues, and the community, while elevating artistic visibility throughout Lincoln and creating a vibrant ecosystem for artistic growth. Scheduled to begin development in January 2024, the project underlines the commitment to making Lincoln a beacon for community-wide innovation and collaboration.

Creative District

Lincoln Arts is spearheading a transformative initiative to breathe life into the core of downtown Lincoln, envisaging a vibrant creative district that celebrates the arts and community engagement.

Blank Canvases

Under the banner of "Blank Canvas," we are reimagining vacant spaces in downtown Lincoln, such as the former Union Bank & Trust space in the Nelnet building at 13th & O Streets, turning them into temporary hubs for artistic expression. The inaugural project is set to open in March 2024.

First Fridays

Another exciting venture is the revitalization of First Fridays, where Lincoln Arts will provide coordination and marketing assistance. In a bid to infuse additional energy into these evenings, Tower Square in Downtown Lincoln will host a Maker's Market and live music, promising a lively atmosphere. Not just limited to art enthusiasts, the initiative aims to enhance inclusivity by providing guided First Friday tours, offering a unique and immersive experience for both local residents and visitors. To ensure this initiative reaches locals beyond downtown and outside of Lincoln, Lincoln Arts and the Downtown Lincoln Association will lead a joint marketing strategy for both these arts events and assets in the downtown area.



LOOKING AHEAD

Lincoln Calling

In June 2023, Lincoln Arts and Lincoln Calling merged to shape the future of arts, music, and culture in Nebraska's capital. Lincoln Calling will become a cornerstone event of Lincoln Arts' vibrant annual programming. This merger will help create a more inclusive and vibrant cultural landscape by leveraging the combined resources and expertise of both organizations. The 20th Anniversary Lincoln Calling Musical Festival, now under Lincoln Arts' stewardship, is scheduled for May 3-4, 2024.

Creative Connection Hub

After a hiatus prompted by the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, Lincoln Arts is relaunching our creative connection initiative, now titled "Creative Connection Hub," in 2024. This program aims to foster meaningful connections among local artists and creatives from diverse backgrounds and disciplines, providing valuable opportunities for networking, as well as fostering both professional and creative development.

Strategic Plan

In developing the new Lincoln Arts strategic plan, we undertook a comprehensive and inclusive approach that involved engaging a diverse array of stakeholders, including artists, arts organizations, patrons, staff, and board members. Through a series of meticulously planned activities—two facilitated focus groups, a stakeholder survey, and a workshop session led by external facilitators from WaltherSeck Associates—we harnessed the collective wisdom and insights of our community.

The resulting strategic plan is a testament to the collaborative spirit that defines Lincoln Arts. The plan focuses our efforts in four key areas: Arts Access, Arts Advocacy, Arts Events and Arts Industry Support. As we look ahead, our strategic plan serves as a blueprint for expanding our reach and deepening our impact, reinforcing our commitment to fostering a flourishing and inclusive arts community in Lincoln.

