


FACT SHEET  
ON **ART &  
CULTURE**  
HELPING  
PEOPLE  
BEFORE,  
DURING,  
& AFTER  
DISASTERS

JULY 2024



**FEMA**





**This Fact Sheet on the intersection of art, emergency management, and community resilience provides an overview of what emergency managers, artists, and art and culture organizations need to harness the strength of the arts and fortify communities, champion equity, and build local community resilience.**



# FEMA Grant Programs to Support Arts and Cultural Organizations

Are you an arts or cultural organization that wants to learn more about how you can use FEMA grant funding to build resilience, communicate risk, or mitigate hazards? Are you a state, local, Tribal, or territorial government official who wants to partner with an arts or cultural organization to build community resilience? **The following non-exhaustive list provides more information on how to access FEMA grant programs.**

## FEMA Nonprofit Security Grant Program

[This Grant Program](#) provides funding for target hardening and physical security enhancements for community organizations at high risk of terrorist attacks, such as art museums or cultural institutions.

- **Application Details:** Community organizations cannot apply directly for the Grant Program but can apply for funding through their state. Community organizations must be designated as 501(c)(3) entities to be eligible. For more information on applying, contact your state's designated contact by visiting [FEMA's Preparedness Grants](#) site.

## FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities

[This FEMA program](#) provides funding for hazard mitigation projects focused on building capability and capacity, innovation, and partnerships at the local level. This funding can (and has been) used to build resilience in creative and artistic ways.

- **Application Details:** Community organizations cannot apply directly for this grant program; however, they can be included in application packages submitted by their state, territory, or federally recognized Tribal Nation. Art institutions, cultural entities, and other organizations can contact their city, town, or county managers to discuss inclusion in statewide application packages. For more information on how to apply, visit [FEMA's Before You Apply](#) page.



*Image credit: Matt Barton, Community Forms, 2021, concrete, formed earth, recycled materials, rebar, landscaping. Site-specific art installation located at the TAXI Campus in Denver, Colorado. Photo by Third Dune Productions. Courtesy of the artist and Black Cube.*



## FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

[This grant program](#) provides funding to state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments to help them develop hazard mitigation plans to rebuild in creative ways that reduce or mitigate future disaster losses in their communities. This grant funding is available after a presidentially declared disaster.

- **Application Details:** Homeowners, businesses, and community organizations cannot directly apply for HMGP funding. However, a local community may apply for funding on their behalf. Awardees must develop and adopt hazard mitigation plans to receive funding. For more information on applying, visit FEMA's [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program](#) page.

## FEMA Public Assistance

[FEMA's Public Assistance program](#) provides supplemental funding to state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments and certain private non-profit organizations to help communities quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. This funding can be used for emergency needs such as debris removal and for the repair, replacement, or restoration of permanent facilities such as museums and performing arts centers, including equipment and contents. Funding can also be provided for mitigation to reduce the risk of future damage.

- **Application Details:** Under the this program, states, Tribal Nations, and territories serve as the recipients of grant funding. Eligible applicants, including local governments and private non-profit organizations, apply for this funding through their respective recipient. Examples of eligible private non-profit organizations include community centers offering arts services, performing arts centers, museums, and others. For a full list of eligible and non-eligible private non-profit organizations, refer to [FEMA's Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide \(PAPPG\) Tables 1-3](#). For more information on this FEMA program, visit [FEMA's Public Assistance](#) page.

## FEMA Individual Assistance

This [FEMA program](#) provides money to help individuals recover from losses caused by Presidentially declared disasters, including money for home repairs and certain personal property not covered by insurance. In 2024, this program was updated to cut red tape and expand eligibility to reach more people and help them recover faster. These changes simplify the process for entrepreneurs and self-employed individuals and provide money to replace disaster-damaged tools and equipment used by artists for school or work.

- **Application details:** If you live or work in an area covered by a Presidentially declared disaster, you may be eligible for individual assistance. For more information on applying, visit [DisasterAssistance.gov](#).

*Image credit: Matt Barton, Community Forms, 2021, concrete, formed earth, recycled materials, rebar, landscaping. Site-specific art installation located at the TAXI Campus in Denver, Colorado. Photo by Third Dune Productions. Courtesy of the artist and Black Cube.*





# FEMA Best Practices in Partnering with Arts and Cultural Organizations

At FEMA, we are building partnerships and leveraging art in creative ways to drive equity, spur resilience, and build a culture of preparedness. **Below are some of our best practices in partnering with arts and cultural organizations to advance life-sustaining work to support communities before, during, and after disasters.** We hope these examples provide inspiration on how your organization can support artistic and cultural initiatives to advance similar goals.

## Ready Campaign

Launched in February 2003, the [Ready Campaign](#) is the nation's primary preparedness initiative designed to educate and empower Americans to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate emergencies and disasters.



- In 2021, we transformed the campaign to include accessible and culturally competent information to reach, resonate with, and mobilize vulnerable populations that are disproportionately impacted by disaster.
- In partnership with the Ad Council and creative ad agencies, FEMA has developed campaigns and preparedness messaging to reflect the needs of unique communities by tailoring messages and leveraging artists and cultural organizations from the community.
- For example, in past years FEMA focused on the Latino community, Black and African American Community, and older adults with disabilities, limited resources, as well as those living in rural areas. The Ready Campaign conducted listening sessions and market research to determine culturally-appropriate messaging and best practices to support its targeted campaign.
- Additionally, FEMA built partnerships with credible and trusted external stakeholders to support the development and delivery of messages.

RAIN OR  
SHINE, MY  
MEDICATION  
SUPPLY  
WON'T  
RUN DRY.







Stephanie Sanz. NFIP Hurricane "Keep Home" Campaign: Texas

## National Flood Insurance Program

Art can be an essential source of connection, helping individuals, families, and businesses imagine the impact to their own community from what might seem like a low-probability event like a flood. Purchasing flood insurance through FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program is necessary for many, but the rate of policies in some communities is low, leaving them open to risks.

- In 2021 and again in 2023, FEMA partnered with local artists to create original artwork and visuals that authentically conveyed the unique look and feel of various communities across the U.S., including Texas, Florida, Louisiana, New Jersey, Atlanta, and New York City. These pieces underscored the local pride angle to further motivate households and businesses to obtain or renew their flood insurance policies through seeing themselves in the messaging.

## ArtWorks

The FEMA ArtWorks program is based out of FEMA Region 8 in Denver. The program is designed to raise risk awareness and start dialogues on the need and value of flood mitigation. It does this through partnerships between FEMA, artists, and local communities.

- In 2022, FEMA Region 8 and artist Matt Barton completed the first project of FEMA ArtWorks: Community Forms. Barton created sculptures that guide storm runoff through the site to a nearby water-collection channel. Community Forms encourages play and a novel solution to flood mitigation. The installation is both functional for reducing stormwater runoff and serving as a fun skateboard park for community members. For more information, visit the [FEMA ArtWorks Program](#) page.







Gina Phillips. NFIP "Keep Home" Campaign: Louisiana

## Heritage Emergency National Task Force

FEMA and the Smithsonian Institution co-sponsor [this task force](#), a partnership of more than 60 national service organizations and federal agencies created to protect cultural heritage in our nation's states, Tribal Nations, territories, and local communities from the damaging effects of natural disasters and other emergencies.

- The task force works in collaboration with state arts agencies and local arts councils to help direct affected arts organizations to FEMA's Public Assistance program (see the section above for more information about this grant).
- When a major disaster is declared, members of the task force initiate a chain of communications to share response and recovery resources, solicits reports of damage and unmet needs from affected arts and cultural institutions, and helps them navigate the process to apply for a grant through FEMA's Public Assistance program by providing guidance and disseminating information and updates to local stakeholders.
- Contact [fema-hentf@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-hentf@fema.dhs.gov) for more information about the task force.

## Maui Wildfires and Cultural Protocol Task Force

Following the wildfires that devastated the community of Lāhainā on Maui, FEMA's Office of External Affairs quickly recognized that standard messaging would not resonate with or be trusted by certain communities who needed important information on how to jumpstart their recovery.

- A working group led by FEMA's Office of External Affairs, the DHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, and FEMA's Office of Equal Rights was created at FEMA Headquarters with senior leadership, members of FEMA's Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group, and other employees seeking their cultural and community insights to quickly develop new materials with this community's needs in mind. Another major collaborator was the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. Based on feedback from the field and disaster survivors, this working group informed the development of new culturally competent materials, including public service announcements and social media graphics and posts. Existing materials were also updated to better reflect the cultures and communities on Maui.
- On Maui, a Cultural Protocol Task Force was organized with FEMA employees with direct connections to the communities affected by the wildfires and led by the Senior Advisor for Native Hawaiian Affairs from the U.S. Department of the Interior. Part of the task force's role was to advise field leadership on the significance of cultural institutions and historic landmarks so response and recovery activities were respectful and inclusive.





Stephanie Sanz. NFIP Hurricane "Keep Home" Campaign: Texas

## Considerations for Getting Started

Now that you have learned about how you can leverage FEMA's various grant programs for funding and some of the best practices in partnering with arts and cultural organizations, it is time to get started. **Below are considerations for 1) state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, and 2) community arts and cultural organizations to build partnerships and support impactful art or cultural projects to build preparedness and mitigate future hazards.**

### Considerations for State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Governments

Research and identify local partners and organizations that **represent and understand your community's diverse culture**. Potential partners could include local or county arts councils or agencies, arts service organizations, artist-in-residence organizations, local arts districts, museums, or college and university arts programs.

Engage with local community organizations **before** disaster strikes to better understand their needs, especially those related to grant funding. If organizations are eligible for funding under one of FEMA's grant programs, **work together with community organizations** to co-create applications and initiatives that support mitigation and preparedness.

Contact [FEMA-ExpandingMitigation@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-ExpandingMitigation@fema.dhs.gov) for more information on how you can **make the connection** between art and hazard mitigation.

**Engage with community organizations** in your jurisdictions to discuss how they can integrate into hazard mitigation planning. Community resiliency involves the whole community, so local organizations can be key partners in developing mitigation plans and projects.



## Considerations for Community Arts and Cultural Organizations

**Get connected!** Join local arts councils, arts service organizations and/or districts, collaborate with museums, or partner with college and university arts programs. Use these networks to learn about opportunities to participate in impactful art or work together to secure funding for community preparedness or rebuilding projects.

Learn about the hazards and risks in your community and consider how your skills and art can **communicate those risks or contribute to resilience in new or innovative ways**. Contact [FEMA-ExpandingMitigation@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-ExpandingMitigation@fema.dhs.gov) for more information on how you can connect with local officials in your area to reduce your risk from hazards.

### **Act before disaster strikes!**

Building readiness will ensure you are poised to support your community through your art or cultural organization before, during, or after a disaster. Leverage FEMA programs and grants that will increase your resilience and familiarize yourself with recovery grants so you can play an essential role in your community's recovery.



Gina Phillips. NFIP "Keep Home" Campaign: Louisiana



# More Information About This Fact Sheet & FEMA's Commitment to the Arts

Acknowledging the transformative power of art, this document underscores FEMA's steadfast commitment to fostering equity and local resilience through investment in artistic initiatives and cultural preservation. President Biden's Executive Order 14084, which emphasizes the role of the arts, the humanities, and cultural institutions, is a guiding principle for our efforts.

FEMA recognizes that the arts are all around us and are a key part of our communities. Art plays a pivotal role in fostering community resilience by serving as a means of communication for risk awareness, anchoring us to our community before disasters, providing solace and healing following disasters, and inspiring civic creativity for recovery.

## Other Resources

The following list provides additional resources for state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments and local community organizations to expand mitigation:

- [FEMA Inspiration Book: Arts and Experiential Learning](#)
- [FEMA Guide to Expanding Mitigation: Making the Connection with Arts & Culture](#)
- [National Endowment for the Arts: How to Do Creative Placemaking](#)
- [National Endowment for the Humanities State and Jurisdictional Humanities Councils](#)
- [National Coalition for Arts and Preparedness and Emergency Response \(NCAPER\) Arts Field Guide to Federal Disaster Relief](#)
- [Craft Emergency Relief Fund \(CERF+\)](#)
- [FEMA and HENTF Save Your Family Treasures](#)
- [Crisis Analysis & Mitigation \(CAM\) Coaching Program](#)
- [National Endowment for the Arts: Regional Arts Organizations](#)
- [National Endowment for the Arts: State Profiles](#)
- [Performing Arts Readiness](#)

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Learn more at [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov)