

Dear colleagues:

There's no doubt the Coronavirus pandemic is changing our world, and the South Dakota Arts Council wants to assure you we're here to support you however we can.

Please know our staff is working remotely until state employees are directed to return to our offices. Reach out to us at any time via email with your questions or concerns. But also know there is no reason you must reach out about your grants and events right away. We know your immediate attention is required within your organizations, communities, and families. The last thing we want to do is add stress to our arts community during this crisis. We will be here when you're ready, and we will work to help artists and organizations through this difficult time.

On that note, we'd greatly appreciate your assistance in completing this [5-minute survey](#) to help us best understand the impact the current situation is having on you. The survey is for both arts organizations AND artists.

It's difficult for us to predict how this emergency will affect our field long-term, but below are some important answers to questions you may have on your mind:

- State employees are currently working remotely, and there are a few things that were put on hold this week as we all adjust to new technology and processes, however, we've been assured that grant payments will resume next week. So please know that our funding will continue to flow as you request it.
- If you applied for a grant for our fiscal year 2021, beginning July 1, 2020, the review process is under way. We will complete the panel process and keep our spring meeting as scheduled to approve grant awards. There is no expected change to our regular timeline as it pertains to our next grant cycle.
- We have many students, artists, and organizations affected by closures and cancellations through our Touring Arts and Artists in Schools & Communities residency programs. We are asking that you try to reschedule those events, and we're confident we will be able to extend our grant period by at least 90 days – or through Sept. 30, 2020. Please reach out to us with questions.
- If you need help dealing with and responding to the COVID-19 outbreak, please refer to Arts South Dakota's [resources page dedicated to COVID-19](#) through the lens of the statewide arts community. It is updated regularly and includes a link to the latest information from the S.D. Department of Health as well.
- At this point, the [South Dakota Arts Conference](#) is still on. We are hopeful conditions will improve and that it will be safe to gather in May as planned. We know how valuable the time we spend together is, so we'll do all we can to make that happen while being responsible in following public health guidelines at the federal and state level.

Thank you for your dedication to the arts in South Dakota as we work together to weather this storm.