

# ADVOCACY TOOLS & RESOURCES



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# GETTING STARTED

**The study results from AEP6 can be one of your most valuable tools in building support for arts and culture from your elected officials. Elected officials want to ensure their cities, states, and regions have strong economies.**

AEP6 will help paint a better picture of the critical role nonprofit arts and culture play in creating and sustaining vibrant communities. If you already have a relationship with one or more of your elected officials, you are ahead of the game. If you don't, make it a point to get to know them.

Find out who represents you by simply entering your zip code here:

<https://www.votervoice.net/ARTSUSA/address>





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# MEETING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

**Here are some tips on meeting with your elected officials:**

- Plan to meet with your elected officials as soon as possible.
- You can meet with your elected officials individually or in a group.
- Make sure they understand and are comfortable with all the information and research from AEP6. It's important that they can confidently present the data to others.
- Leave them a short, one-page summary of your AEP6 results. Consider giving them multiple copies so they can readily present the information to their constituents.
- Provide them with sample responses they can use with their constituents who don't support the arts or believe government funds for the arts are a frivolous waste of taxpayer dollars.
- Tell them how you plan to use your AEP6 results.
- While meeting with the elected official is optimal, meeting with their staff is also important.
- Build a relationship. Don't let your first meeting be your last.

**If it's difficult to schedule a meeting with an elected official, try to determine whether they're really busy or just trying to avoid meeting with you. If the latter, ask one of your board members to request a meeting and attend with you.**

# PROCLAMATIONS & ADVOCACY DAYS

## Proclamations

Ask legislators that have indicated their support for the arts to sponsor a proclamation recognizing the economic and social impact of the arts in their community (these are sometimes called "whereas documents"). Time this resolution to be presented as soon as possible after you've announced your findings. Someone in your city government may write resolutions using a standard format or you may be asked to draft the resolution yourself. We have provided you with a template proclamation you can use below.

[Proclamation Template](#)

## Arts and Culture Advocacy Day

Consider designating a specific day to focus on the arts and your elected officials: an Arts and Culture Advocacy Day, during which as many arts supporters as possible visit with their elected officials to discuss the importance of arts and culture. Ask nonprofit arts and culture organizations to visit at least two elected officials on that day. Make sure that all elected officials get several visits.



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# ADDITIONAL ACTIVATION IDEAS...

### LEVERAGE A LARGE ARTS

**EVENT:** If there is an arts festival, museum exhibit opening, a play, or concert happening in your community, be sure to invite your legislator so she/he can see how important the arts are to the people they represent. This experience plus their newfound knowledge of the economic and social impact of the arts in the community would serve as a valuable connection.

### ACKNOWLEDGE ELECTED

**OFFICIALS:** Recognize your elected officials at every possible opportunity when they use your AEP6 data or support arts and culture in general. Everyone likes to be thanked. Furthermore, they need votes and recognition of their good work to receive them.

**REMEMBER:** You're not only a constituent and a voter to your elected official, but also a valuable resource. As a leader in your arts and culture community, you can speak on behalf of a large group of voters. The arts and culture community (board, staff, patrons, volunteers, arts educators, etc.) represent a large constituency. Voter research suggests that people with passion are more likely to vote in local elections. And arts supporters vote in high percentages.

TOOLS & RESOURCES

# ADVOCACY SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Here is a collection of sample copy and graphics for your team to use to target elected officials to promote your AEP6 study results.

Download [Graphics and Copy](#)

All AEP6 findings are strictly embargoed and may not be shared until after the October 12 national release.

