



# NEWS FROM TCA: JANUARY 2025

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We're greeting the new year with outstretched arms in the spirit of this model from the Denton Redbud Festival's Reuse Runway Fashion Show. Scroll down for news on one last TCA virtual field listening session, a Panhandle grants workshop, several upcoming deadlines, the consideration of our next budget, an upcoming conference, and a feature on a TCA grant that helped an established organization grow and try new things. Photo from the Original Denton District.

## Legislative Session Starts Soon, Will Determine Next TCA Budget

The 89th Session of the Texas Legislature will begin on Tuesday, **January 14**. Since the Texas Legislature meets biennially, it will make decisions on two years' worth of State budgeting, including TCA's budget for fiscal year 2026 (September 1, 2025-August 31, 2026) and fiscal year 2027 (September 1, 2026-August 31, 2027). As part of the budget process, TCA filed a Strategic Plan and Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR). The format of the LAR allows TCA to request the amount of its current two-year budget as the



Base Appropriations Request, and to ask for Exceptional Items as additions to the budget for the coming two years.

TCA's Legislative Appropriations Request is available in full [here](#).

**Base Appropriations Request: \$31,935,146 over the biennium**  
**Exceptional Items: \$11,570,192 over the biennium**  
**(detailed below)**

In addition to the Base Appropriations Request, TCA is requesting increased funds (Exceptional Items) of \$9 million over the biennium for arts organization grants, \$2 million over the biennium for cultural districts, and \$570,192 for staff retention and two additional staff members over the biennium.

TCA's Legislative Appropriations Request will be considered as part of **Senate Bill 1**. After the Legislature convenes on January 14, committee appointments will be made. The Senate Finance Committee and the House Appropriations Committee will review TCA's LAR and discuss all requested amounts. The Legislative Session will end on June 2, 2025.

Texans for the Arts Foundation will host an **Arts Advocacy Day** at the Capitol on February 5, 2025. More information on that event is [here](#).

## Amarillo Grants Workshop January 22



Panhandle area, please join us! On Wednesday, **January 22, 2025**, Humanities Texas and the Texas Commission on the Arts will hold a [free grants workshop](#) for Panhandle-area organizations at the Amarillo Area Foundation. Learn about new funding opportunities and other resources and programs provided by Humanities Texas and TCA.

Representatives from both organizations will be available for questions during the workshop.

This event is ideal for representatives of nonprofit organizations and units of government, including schools and libraries. [Register](#) in advance to reserve your spot as space is limited.

## Support Texas Arts with the *State of the Arts* License Plate

TCA's chic black-and-silver *State of the Arts* minimalist design license plate is available to order at <https://www.myplates.com/go/arts>. This plate design can go on a passenger car, motorcycle, trailer, or private bus (attention, Texas bands!).



TCA will receive a portion of the sales of the plate. Note that this plate is part of MyPlates' "Lone Star Series," but only the *State of the Arts* plate supports TCA. There is a price break for those ordering their plate for multiple years. Make a long-term commitment to the arts!

## TCA Speaker Series: Listening Sessions

There is one more chance to join a TCA listening session! The free online listening sessions are an opportunity for TCA to learn more about you and your recent successes, challenges, and needs. Through your participation, you can help TCA assess the needs of our field, and guide the next year's slate of TCA Speaker Series events. TCA is holding three sessions to accommodate greater interest and holiday performance schedules.

Thank you to those who joined us for a listening session on December 10 or 12. Each session follows the same agenda.

The final session will be held on **Thursday, January 9** at 11 AM Central (register [here](#)).

Note that registration does not guarantee a spot in this event, as spaces are limited. Be quick to join us on the day-of to experience this conversation in real time! These sessions will not be recorded.

A graphic with a light green background. At the top, the words "LISTENING SESSIONS" are written in large, bold, black capital letters. Below this, two dates and times are listed: "12/10/24 11 AM CST" and "12/12/24 2 PM CST". In the center, there is a line drawing of four people sitting around a table, engaged in a discussion. One person is pointing at a laptop screen displaying a bar chart. Below the drawing, two more dates and times are listed: "1/9/25 11 AM CST" and "Join us online".

12/10/24 11 AM CST      12/12/24 2 PM CST

1/9/25 11 AM CST      Join us online

## Upcoming TCA Deadlines

TCA has several upcoming deadlines. As always, the TCA staff is happy to discuss your goals and eligibility to determine which programs are right for you. You may also request that a TCA staff member review your application and provide feedback. Ideally, these requests would be made at least two weeks before the application deadline.

### Grant Program: Arts Respond Project

Arts Respond Project grants provide project assistance grants to nonprofit arts organizations on a short-term basis and may include administrative costs directly related to the project. Projects must address one of the following priority areas: economic development, education, health & human services, public safety & criminal justice, or natural resources & agriculture.

**Activity dates must be:** Between April 1, 2025 and August 31, 2025

**Application deadline:** Midnight on January 15, 2025

**Application form:** [Online](#)

**Application Limit:** Organizations may submit one application for this deadline.

Organizations should not submit more than one application addressing the same priority area per TCA fiscal year.

**Resources:** [Program guidelines](#), [eligibility check](#) by priority area, [video](#) about the grant program and online application process, [contact TCA staff](#)

### **Designation Program: Cultural Districts Designation**

This program designates special zones in cities and Texas communities that harness the power of cultural resources to stimulate economic development and community revitalization. Interested applicants to TCA's Cultural Districts Designation program are required to submit a Letter of Intent.

**Letter of Intent deadline:** January 31, 2025; **TCA recommends using the form found [here](#)** to ensure all the key pieces of information are included, and scheduling a Zoom visit with TCA staff by emailing [districts@arts.texas.gov](mailto:districts@arts.texas.gov).

**Application deadline:** June 16, 2025

**Application form:** On [Cultural Districts Program page](#)

**Resources:** [Program guidelines](#), [training materials](#), [contact TCA staff](#)

### **Grant Program: Arts Respond Performance Support**

This program provides professional artist fees to Texas nonprofits, schools, colleges, and units of government for hiring an artist from the [Texas Touring Roster](#) to do a performance or conduct a workshop. These applications are funded based on a percentage of contracted fees.

**Activity dates must start:** Between March 15, 2025 and June 14, 2025

**Application deadline:** Midnight on February 3, 2025

**Application form:** [Online](#)

**Resources:** [Grant guidelines](#), [contact TCA staff](#)

### **Grant Program: Arts Create**

This program provides multi-year operational support to arts organizations with established cash budgets over \$50,000.

**Support dates must be:** Between September 1, 2025 and August 31, 2026

**Application deadline:** Midnight on March 3 or March 17, 2025. **Note:** deadline varies depending on organization classification. Your organization's specific deadline will be shown in your online account with TCA.

**Application form:** [Online](#)

**Resources:** [Grant guidelines](#), [contact TCA staff](#)

## **Real Places 2025 Conference**



TCA is a member of a group of State agencies that work together under a memorandum of understanding to promote tourism. One of our partner agencies, the Texas Historical Commission, is holding a conference soon that will address the needs of museums and other cultural venues. In fact, representatives from TCA and the Governor's Office of Economic Development and Tourism Travel Texas will present a session titled The Intersection of Culture and Tourism: Understanding Designations and Their Impact.

The **Texas Historical Commission's Real Places 2025 conference** will take place both virtually and in person, in Austin, **April 23–25**. Presented by the Friends of the Texas

Historical Commission in partnership with Phoenix I Restoration and Construction, LLC, Real Places is the premier historic preservation and heritage tourism event in the Lone Star State, where anyone interested in protecting our past can work directly with industry-leading experts to learn practical, actionable solutions they can apply in their community.

The packed schedule features more than 50 workshops, tours, and sessions; over 100 expert speakers from across Texas and the U.S.; several keynote presentations; and a number of fun networking events. Recordings will be available to all attendees, whether joining online or in person, so you'll be able to watch the great presentations you missed due to concurrent sessions. Learn more and sign up at [realplaces.us](https://realplaces.us).

## Welcome, Jared!

On December 2, TCA welcomed a new program assistant to our staff. Jared VosWinkel was born and raised in Abilene. During his high school years, he discovered a love for performing and began acting in theater, as well as participating in UIL Prose & Poetry and One Act Play. He later earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in acting from the University of Texas at Austin, along with a minor in arts management and administration. Outside of the theater, Jared enjoys cooking, walking trails with his two dachshunds, and playing Dungeons & Dragons.



*Photo: Kathryn Lane Photography*

## Grantee Spotlight: Embracing New Methods to Expand Reach

Every fall, TCA staff spend many, many hours reviewing report forms that grantees submit as they close out their grants. These reports share arts organizations' trials and tribulations, challenges and solutions. Many of these stories will resonate with others across our field, so we're sharing some of them through grantee spotlights.



Today, we are highlighting the **Victoria Bach Festival (VBF)**, which will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2025, but is still “adapting to the evolving tastes and needs of its audience while staying true to its core mission of education and inspiration.” In 2024, the organization was supported by a TCA Arts Create grant, which helped them increase community outreach and access through dynamic programming decisions and a new, robust marketing campaign to reach more potential audience members.

The Festival performed the US premiere of Camille Pépin's *The Sound of Trees*, expanding their support for contemporary music. In addition to festival week performances, VBF offered both free and pay-what-you-can concerts throughout the year, which removed financial barriers for many participants, and helped deepen the community's familiarity with the Festival's offerings.

The Arts Create grant also helped Victoria Bach Festival reallocate their resources to partner with a third-party marketing vendor. The vendor helped streamline VBF's branding and implement targeted campaigns to increase visibility and engagement, which the grant report called "a game-changer." These combined efforts led to a noticeable surge in ticket sales and attendance at paid and free events by new and returning audience members. Attendees expressed gratitude for the opportunity to experience live music without financial strain. For many, these performances were their first encounter with orchestral or choral music, sparking a newfound appreciation for the art form.

TCA is proud to be able to support the Victoria Bach Festival and so many wonderful organizations across the state who make the arts accessible to our fellow Texans.

*Photo: Danny Vivian*

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Texas Commission on the Arts  
1801 Congress Avenue  
Austin, TX 78701  
512-463-5535  
800-252-9415  
[arts.texas.gov](http://arts.texas.gov)



Texas Commission on the Arts | 1801 Congress Avenue Suite 6.600 | Austin, TX 78701 US

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