



November 24, 2024

Dear Friends,

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Sending an annual appeal letter out weeks after a national election is hard. Many people, including myself, are in a deep reflective posture, exhausted, or as my elders used to say — *spent*. The past few months have been fraught, but if I am being honest it has been this way for a while.

Throughout my tenure in the artist residency field, I have witnessed the financial precarity that many artists live with. Sufficient resources - social, emotional and environmental - to support a full life has eluded most working artists. At the same time, artist residencies face similar challenges, operating on too thin margins.

Given our current context, the calls for artists to do more and to lead us, have proliferated. Every day, across channels, we see well-intentioned arts leaders and funders quoting Baldwin, Morrison, Simone, and others about the role of the artist in society, stating proudly and loudly that when all is lost, artists will lead the way.

With this clear acknowledgement of the value of artists and the need for artists to make and be in community, to help us grapple with the most pressing questions of our time, I can't help but wonder why we do not have more artist income-driven programs? And why, when artist residencies — which collectively, do more to support individual artists than any combination of awards and sweepstakes programs offered by foundations — still have to work so hard to fund basic operating expenses?

As we come into our 35th year, we are taking a multi-tiered approach to address these questions, and we are committed to the following actions:

- In 2025, we will be announcing our new **values-based network**, which will remove the dues requirements from membership.
- Launch the **ACA Artist Relief Fund** to provide emergency funding to artists who are facing a threat to their safety while attending an artist residency in the ACA network.

**Artist
Communities
Alliance**

- Bring back the **largest residency conference in the world in 2025** in Washington, DC, where we can celebrate and advocate for this field together.

In 2023, we removed the financial barriers to entry for ACA's Board of Directors, to ensure that we have working artists, residency leaders, residency partners, policy makers, and representation from historically underrepresented people in our governance structure. This year, ACA's board of directors is launching a Catalyst Fund to support board members who may lack institutional support or funding to participate in board related activities.

We continue to focus on ways to transform the field, and we cannot do this without you.

Please consider making a donation to ACA today. In a time where artists and residency operators are struggling to find connection, compassion, and the tools to do their best work, help us to meet them where they are.

In community,



Lisa Funderburke
President and CEO

Make a gift in the way that works best for you: write a check payable to Artist Communities Alliance or visit: www.ArtistCommunities.org/donate. Your contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Consider increasing your donation this year to support the newly launched Catalyst Fund! See website for details and to contribute.