

# Northwest Minnesota Arts Council Fiscal Years 2012 – 2013 Plan

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# Mission Statement

The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council's mission is to support and enhance the development of the arts in northwestern Minnesota. The Council's purpose is to facilitate and encourage the creation and appreciation of the arts.

The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council serves as an advocate for local and regional arts development. Assistance and encouragement is provided to the people of the region to enhance the quality and availability of arts experiences.

## Vision

Through the leadership of the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council: all people in northwestern Minnesota will have access to the arts; the arts will be integrated into the fabric of the community; and art will become an essential part of community building.

## Legacy

The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council serves Minnesotans in creating an arts legacy for the state. The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council, Region 1, has developed a number of methods to increase arts participation, increase visibility of the arts in rural Minnesota, and improve access to the arts for our rural residents and youth. These compliment joint guiding principles, vision, goals and key strategies of the higher level planning this year by the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Forum of Regional Arts Council's. The overarching goal is "The arts are essential to a vibrant society."

## Needs Assessment

NWMAC invites constituents to participate directly in its planning and information gathering process through forums, public meetings, written evaluations and assessments, electronic surveys of grant applicants and program participants, and constituent e-mail comments.

Most significantly, with a small part of its funding from the McKnight Foundation, the Forum of Regional Arts Councils of Minnesota engaged evaluation consultant Patricia Shifferd to assist the Regional Arts Councils in designing effective evaluation instruments for our grantees, and for the operations of the Councils. One component of this work was a survey that Dr. Shifferd designed that was uniform for all eleven Councils. Dr. Shifferd also disseminated the survey to our respective constituents, and tabulated and reported the results by region. This proved to be an extremely effective and efficient method of gathering data and assessing our performance as Regional Arts Councils.

## Needs Assessment Summary

Using the needs assessment information that we gathered from the areas outlined above, we identified the following main categories.

1. Arts Project Grant Support: Grants to support a large range of arts projects occurring in all parts of our region. Addressed in Priority 1 Goal 1 of Work Plan.
2. Informational sessions, grant writing assistance, and organizational professional development in the form of presentations, convenings, and workshops. Addressed in Priority 1 Goal 2 and Goal 3(e) of

Work Plan.

3. Artist Residency Support and lifelong learning opportunities: Grants to school districts to bring in residency artists and afterschool or summer arts experiences for students and community members. Grants to students for mentorship and training. Addressed in Priority 3 Goal 1 and Goal 3 of Work Plan.

4. Newsletter, e-newsletter, and other printed marketing information and website information: Addressed in Priority 4 Goal 1-4 of Work Plan.

5. Bring more resources into our region through successful role in partnerships, collaboration, and legislative action. Addressed in Priority 1 Goal 4; Priority 4 Goal 4; and Priority 5 Goal 1-2 of Work Plan.

6. Venues/opportunities for exhibit, performance, and workshop space in the region. Addressed in Priority 1 Goal 3; and Priority 4 Goal 4 of Work Plan.

7. Marketing/promotional assistance, networking, and celebrating the artists and arts in our region. Addressed in Priority 1 Goal 3; and Priority 4 Goal 2 and 4 of Work Plan.

## Planning Process

The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council met in January, March and April of 2011 to develop the plan. Arts Council board members and staff reviewed the grantee survey results for the Northwest Region conducted by Dr. Shifferd. Outcome measurement results and criteria were reviewed. The guidelines and outcome measurement tools developed by the Minnesota State Arts Board and other regions were reviewed. Members used the FY 2010-11 plans as a basis for the plan.

A public meeting for review of the biennial plan was held on May 5 at 4:00 pm in Warren; and on May 11 at 4:00 in East Grand Forks. The public was informed of the plan hearing by e-newsletter and press releases. The plan was available for review and comment on our website. Approval of the plan occurred on May 12, 2011 by the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council; and a summary of proposed changes and the budget were approved on April 26, 2011 by the Northwest Regional Development Commission Board of Directors.

## Organizational Structure

The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council, as a non-profit organization, has entered into a legal Partnership Agreement and Administrative Agreement with the Northwest Regional Development Commission. The Partnership Agreement defines the roles of each Board of Directors and the staff. The Partnership Agreement also provides for the establishment of the Arts Partnership Board. The Arts Partnership Board is the chairman and vice-chairman of each entity.

The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council will be the designated regional arts council for Region 1 according to the Partnership.

# Goals and Key Strategies

In order to realize our legacy vision, the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Forum of Regional Arts Councils and our Northwest Minnesota Arts Council must work together to accomplish the following goals. After each goal is a reference into how our programs and services will best accomplish this goal in rural Minnesota.

Overarching Goal	The arts are essential to a vibrant society
Goal Statewide	The arts are interwoven into every facet of community life
Strategy Statewide	Develop strategic relationships and partnerships
NW MN Strategy	Collaboration with local arts organizations, libraries, and cities Partner creatively across sectors to bring arts to community life Connect with other key local leaders in tourism, aging, etc. to reach new facets.
Goal Statewide	People trust Minnesota's stewardship of public arts funding
Strategy Statewide	Ensure sufficient resources to sustain the arts and artists Be responsible stewards of public funds Provide an accountable arts delivery system
NW MN Strategy	Strong staffing support for the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council Solid grant making and monitoring policy and procedure Accountable arts delivery system for Northwest Minnesota
Goal Statewide	People of all ages, ethnicities, and abilities participate in the arts
Strategy Statewide	Fully engage with nontraditional and underrepresented participants Transform everyone's life by experiencing the arts
NW MN Strategy	Encourage participation in our Northwest Minnesota Art Exhibit Fund a variety of arts experiences through our grant programs
Goal Statewide	Minnesotans believe the arts are vital to who we are
Strategy Statewide	Enhance public understanding of the value of the arts
NW MN Strategy	Use our web site to build understanding of the arts in our region Provide more information to the press on the value of the arts Provide a space for artists and arts organizations to convene
Goal Statewide	The arts thrive in Minnesota
Strategy Statewide	Ensure sufficient resources to sustain the arts and artists Foster visionary, skilled arts leaders and organizations statewide
NW MN Strategy	Conduct workshops for arts leaders on capacity building Measure outcomes in our region and use a variety of evaluation tools Adjust programs and services based on needs, feedback, and outcomes

# Work Plan

## **PRIORITY 1:**

**Promote, assist, and provide funds for arts activity in our northwestern region that encourages artistic growth and excellence while sustaining and stabilizing arts in rural areas of Minnesota.**

### **GOAL 1:**

Award thirty Arts Legacy grants and twenty Arts Project Grants and five Cultural Bank Grants to arts organizations and communities based on artistic quality and merit, applicant capability, and the need for the project.

#### **WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Refine the Arts Legacy grant application based on the universal application, created through a joint effort within the Forum of Regional Arts Councils.
- b. Implement the Arts Legacy, Cultural Bank, and Arts Project Grants programs with state funding.
- c. Foster and nurture local arts groups to grow and/or sustain levels of programming through one-on-one visits and suggestions.
- d. Publicize the availability of grant funds in the seven-county area in a timely manner prior to each application deadline. Send reminders of deadlines through our e-newsletter.
- e. Provide technical assistance on the grant application process to organizations.
- f. Administer the review and evaluation process.
- g. Measure outcomes related to these re-grant programs and adjust the process.

### **GOAL 2:**

Provide technical assistance and information to thirty artists, representatives of arts organizations, and others interested in the arts, including six grant writing sessions in FY 2012 and 2013.

#### **WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Review project ideas which an individual or organization may be submitting for funding assistance from the NWRDC and/or other funding sources.
- b. Provide technical assistance on grant preparation and other arts administration, planning and developing ideas. Including grant writing workshops and help to groups with board development and volunteer recruitment.
- c. Provide information services on other public and private grants, programs, and funding sources for both arts organizations and individuals.
- d. Maintain a library of reference materials. Compile into a list for the web site.

### **GOAL 3:**

Organize and implement the Northwest Minnesota Art Exhibition in April 2012 and April 2013. (Currently the Arts Council uses Foundation funding to make the awards to adults and some state and Foundation funding to administer the program and make awards to students.)

#### **WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Select the exhibit location and the sponsoring arts organizations. Develop comprehensive guidelines and resource sheets for communities co-planning of the exhibit.
- b. Publicize the Call for Entries in the seven-county area in a timely manner.
- c. Select and contract with the juror. Provide juror with materials and assistance in the judging.
- d. Act as main coordinator of the exhibit to ensure its success, including registration, hanging the exhibit, creating programs, ensuring guest book volunteers, and prompt

- wrap-up.
- e. Coordinate and implement the Artist Reception for 200 + people.
- f. Organize the touring summer schedule and administer the tour. The tour includes 6 locations that host the traveling exhibit for 3 weeks each.
- g. Measure outcomes and evaluate the program yearly

**GOAL 4:**

Sustain state funding levels for the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council into FY 2014 and 2015.

**WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Actively participate in Minnesota Citizens for the Arts and the Forum of Regional Arts Councils and partner with Minnesota State Arts Board, which includes attending additional meetings and planning retreats at a state level.
- b. Provide information to legislators and legislative committees that inform them on our Arts Council's use of funds.
- c. Promote and inform the public that we are good stewards of the funds.
- d. Look for new ways to partner with other programs and agencies to enrich our region and provide additional funding for staff.
- e. Evaluate our success and measure our outcomes.

**PRIORITY 2:**

**Provide for the administration of the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council.**

**GOAL 1:**

Provide Arts Council Director staffing to the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council in FY 2012 and FY 2013 to ensure base work functions related to planning and procedure are met.

**WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Staff and maintain the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council.
- b. Revise and update the Arts Plan and Budget on an annual basis.
- c. Conduct a regional arts needs assessment every four years.
- d. Fulfill administrative requirements of the Northwest Regional Development Commission and the Minnesota State Arts Board, including preparation of: annual final report on program activities and financial status; work plan and budget for upcoming fiscal year; and re-grant activities reporting.

**GOAL 2:**

Provide orientation/education for new Council members once per year or as needed prior to new members first meeting as a board member.

**WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Provide all new Arts Council members with printed organizational materials.
- b. Provide an orientation for new Council members not only prior to their first meeting but at various times throughout the year.

**GOAL 3:**

Work within the current Arts Partnership and Arts Administrative Agreements and with the Arts Partnership Board toward the mission and vision of the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council.

**WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Through the joint Arts Partnership Board of the RDC and Arts Council work on issues related to achieving the vision for the Arts Council.
- b. Research options as directed by the Arts Partnership Board.
- c. Present updates to the RDC Board and the Arts Council.

### **PRIORITY 3:**

#### **Support and encourage arts experiences in the schools in Northwest Region.**

##### **GOAL 1:**

Award six Arts Legacy Grants and eight Artist in the Schools Grants to area schools based on artistic quality and merit, applicant capability, and the need for the project.

##### **WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Implement the Arts Legacy grant program and Artist in the Schools program with state funding.
- b. Publicize the availability of grant funds for arts education projects in the seven-county area in a timely manner prior to each application deadline.
- c. Provide technical assistance on the grant application process to schools submitting applications.
- d. Administer the review and evaluation process.
- e. Measure the outcomes of implementing a grant program to schools.

##### **GOAL 2:**

Provide information to statewide arts in education key players; and resource sharing quarterly on arts activities in the schools through our web site.

##### **WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Coordinate arts education activities with the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Minnesota Center for Arts Education, and other art education service organizations.
- b. Publicize the availability of Minnesota State Arts Board funds.
- c. Publicize the availability of art education resources such as those provided by the Minnesota Center for Arts Education.
- d. Facilitate a workshop for teachers on resources available to their schools, including grant writing and how to work with a residency artist.

##### **GOAL 3:**

Provide grants to ten high school students to use for mentorship with a local artist or to attend training in their art form.

##### **WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Implement a Student Artist Training Mentorship program with Arts and Cultural Heritage Funding in FY 2012 - 2013.
- b. Update email list for key teachers, administration, and grant writers for the 24 school districts in our region.
- c. Publicize the grant program and send three email announcements to the school teachers.
- d. Hold three grant information sessions in school districts.
- e. Select the panel of reviewers, train the panel and facilitate the review process.
- f. Implement the grant program and monitor the students' progress.
- g. Hold a showcase event for students involved in the program.
- h. Measure outcomes and report results.

## **PRIORITY 4:**

### **Increase visibility and access to information on the arts in northwestern Minnesota.**

#### **GOAL 1:**

Disseminate information on the Arts through a variety of means.

##### **WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Collect information for inclusion in the newsletter and distribute newsletter on a periodic basis. This will allow our individuals and arts groups to learn about exhibit opportunities, locate fairs and festivals, and workshops. Also, the newsletter can serve as a source of sharing tips on items like marketing, training and networking.
- b. Issue press releases on regional Arts Council activities.
- c. Increase the amount of general PR about arts events and the importance of arts in the area.

#### **GOAL 2:**

Maintain an artists' registry and the artist and arts organization directory; and create and publish an Artists of Northwest Minnesota marketing booklet and other publications to promote our artists.

##### **WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Contact new arts organizations and known artists.
- b. Update on a yearly basis for publication as the Northwest Directory of Artists and Arts Organizations.
- c. Work with a local design artist to complete the second Artists of Northwest Minnesota booklet. Print and distribute the booklet.

#### **GOAL 3:**

Maintain and improve the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council web site.

##### **WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Re-format the site as needed to keep it fresh and interesting.
- b. Encourage artists and arts organizations to use the web site to find information.
- c. Update on a monthly basis all web information pertaining to Arts Council programs and services.
- d. Maintain the arts section on the promotional site [visitnwminnesota.com](http://visitnwminnesota.com) in order to provide additional positive PR to the arts program and direct visitors to our artists and arts organizations.

#### **GOAL 4:**

Actively collaborate with other similar organizations in North Dakota. Help arts organizations fully participate in other area and statewide efforts to promote the arts and arts activities.

##### **WORK ACTIVITIES:**

- a. Assist arts organizations in creating simple web pages.
- b. Assist artists and arts organizations with including their listing in MNArtists Online and including their event listing in statewide calendars.
- c. Assist artists and arts organizations with listing on Culture Pulse web site. This site is hosted by North Valley Arts Council in Grand Forks and serves as a great resource for our area related to calendar announcements and artist profiles.
- d. Collaborate with the North Dakota Museum of Art to bring their Rural Arts Initiative touring exhibit program into Northwest Minnesota.

## **PRIORITY 5**

### **Actively participate in the Forum of Regional Arts Council's mission and goals**

#### **GOAL 1:**

Provide leadership in the Forum of Regional Arts Councils.

#### **WORK ELEMENTS:**

- a. Actively participate in Forum meetings and decisions.
- b. Dedicate time and work activity to the Forum's priorities and goals.
- c. Complete Forum projects and assignments in a timely manner.
- d. Serve in the role of an officer if requested.

#### **GOAL 2:**

Collaborate with other state arts agencies and arts partners in serving the State of Minnesota.

#### **WORK ELEMENTS:**

- a. Attend and provide information on northwest region at Minnesota State Arts Board Meetings, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts Meetings, etc.
- b. Provide information as requested for statewide advocacy efforts for the legislature and others.
- c. Provide historical arts information on northwest region.

# Measurable Outcomes for the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council

The Northwest Minnesota Arts Council will measure our achievement of outcomes by answering the same questions that we will be asking our grantees. For each program and service that we implement, we will ask five questions to determine whether that project is working towards our mission and vision and achieving positive results toward program outcomes.

- What are the goals of the project?
- Who specifically will be the target populations of your project?
- How specifically will they be affected by the project?
- How will you know?
- How will the larger community benefit?
- List program outcomes

## Arts Legacy and Arts Project Grants

### **Goal for the Arts Legacy grant program:**

In FY 2012 and 2013, fund a minimum of twenty grants in our region at a \$10,000.00 maximum per grant level with a 10% cash match requirement in Arts Legacy. Targets are arts organizations, schools, cities, and other non-profit service organizations.

### **Goal for the Arts Project grant program:**

In FY 2012 and 2013, fund a minimum of twenty grants in our region at a \$3,000.00 maximum per grant level with a 10% cash match requirement in Arts Project Grants. Targets are past grantees in this program that prefer this application form.

### **Program outcomes:**

New relationships with members of groups that have traditionally been underserved by the arts or by the applicant organization are built.

The quality, types, and number of arts opportunities in the region, and the organizations or venues that offer them, increases.

Real or perceived barriers to arts learning are identified and addressed.

### **Larger community benefit:**

These grants should provide better access to additional art experiences at lower ticket and participant rates. New collaborations and innovative ways to bring professional arts organizations into our region.

## Cultural Bank Grants

### **Purpose**

Provide community arts organizations with a simple application to minimize financial risk while encouraging artistic risk.

Cultural Bank Grants are "insurance" grants that will be awarded only if their project does not break even.

### **Goal for the cultural bank grant program:**

In FY 2012 and 2013, fund a minimum of five Cultural Bank grants in our region. Grants can only be for 1/3 of their actual project cost with a \$1,000.00 maximum.

### **Program outcomes:**

Real or perceived barriers to arts participation and arts access are identified and addressed.

The number of Minnesotans who are able to participate in the arts increases.

### **Larger community benefit:**

The arts organizations will bring new creative perhaps risky ventures to our region.

## **Arts in Education and Lifelong Learning Outcomes**

### **Purpose**

Increase interaction between students, artists, and community members; and provide a new system for training artists to conduct residencies and facilitate teacher/artist communication at a local level.

### **Goal for the artists in the schools grant program:**

In FY 2012 and 2013, fund a minimum of ten grants to school districts in our region at a \$3,000.00 maximum per grant level. Grants are for artist in residency, after school arts programs, and summer youth programs in arts. Targets will be teachers, students, and school administration.

### **Program outcomes:**

The number of Minnesotans who are engaged in arts learning opportunities increases.  
The quality and types of arts learning opportunities in the region increases.

### **Goal for the student grant program:**

In FY 2012 and 2013, fund a minimum of twenty grants to students in our region for \$500.00 to work with a mentor or attend training in their art form. Targets will be high school students in our region, artists interested in being a mentor.

### **Program outcomes:**

The number of Minnesotans who are engaged in arts learning opportunities increases.  
The number of Minnesotans who teach or learn folk or traditional art forms through master/apprentice relationships increases.

### **How will we know?**

The number of applicants to the program will grow and the program will have increased visibility within the school.

### **Larger community benefit:**

The youth participating must show the results of their grant in a public showcase or performance. This will enrich their community and show pride for their artistic accomplishments building their self-esteem.

## **Service Outcomes**

### **Exhibit/Showcase/Training Experiences**

#### **Purpose**

Bring rural artists and arts leaders together to exhibit and showcase their art. Celebrate, stimulate, and display the accomplishments of local artists and arts organizations. Provide a consistent space for artists to "hub from" in our region; and gain experience from peers and qualified professional development consultants. Improve business and board development skills through training and networking.

#### **Goal for the exhibit/showcase/training services:**

In FY 2012 and 2013, implement the Northwest Minnesota Art Exhibition each year and tour the mini exhibit to five libraries in the region. Plan and implement training for arts leaders. Targets are arts organization leaders, artists, arts patrons, tourists, and citizens.

#### **How will they be affected by these services?**

They will be stimulated to create more artwork and to produce a higher quality artistic product. Artists will strengthen their roles within their communities and the region and gain credibility.

#### **Program outcomes:**

Real or perceived barriers to arts participation and arts access are identified and addressed.  
The number of Minnesotans who are able to participate in the arts increases.

#### **Larger community benefit:**

Increased attendance at local events through group booking opportunities. More arts experiences in their communities. A new arts place within the region for professional development and convening in the arts.