

2024
ANNUAL
CONFERENCE



SAN FRANCISCO
HYATT REGENCY - DOWNTOWN SOMA
JULY 25-27, 2024

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SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS

THE POWER OF LOCAL ADVOCACY & CIVIC RELATIONSHIPS

**Leni Boorstin, Marni Cook, Sean Fenton,
Jonathon Glus, Tracy Hudak**

WHY LOCAL ADVOCACY

Arts organizations, through collective, coordinated action, continue to raise awareness: highlighting the creative workforce, the arts and culture ecosystem and the integral place arts and culture have in healthy and thriving cities/towns.

Working together, building alliances, and developing relationships with your representatives strengthens your organization and the impact you have in your community.

The far-reaching impact of orchestras and the performing arts beyond the music itself:

- Arts organizations **boost local economies** and are often key anchors of their neighborhoods / districts
- Arts organizations are **employers**
- Arts organizations are vital (and often underutilized) **partners in civic initiatives and changemaking**
- Arts organizations are often **educators**

Story telling matters – You are a Constituent:

- **Arts organizations are local businesses** made up of employees who are also voters.
- **Relationships matter** – understand who on your board/staff/musicians/music director/guest artists, know any elected officials
- **Seeing is Believing** – invite to concerts and/or education and community programs; use the invite to remind them about your organizations impact
- **Combine voices** and tell the story of your organization along with your arts and culture partners

RELATIONSHIPS & RESOURCES

FEDERAL & STATE

- [Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi](#)
- [Senator Laphonza Butler](#)
- [Senator Alex Padilla](#)
- [Governor Gavin Newsom](#)
- [State Senators & State Assemblymembers](#)
- [California Arts Council](#)
 - [Council Meeting Calendar](#)
- [FEMA](#)

CITY

- Mayor
 - [California League of Cities](#)
 - [United States Conference of Mayors \(usmayors.org\)](#)
 - [Small Cities Council - National League of Cities \(nlc.org\)](#)
- [City Managers](#)
- Board of Supervisors or City Councils
- City Departments including: Arts Commission, City Administrator, DPW, Entertainment Commission, Film Commission, Family Services, OEWD, Parks Department, Public Library, & more...
- Benefit Districts, Cultural Districts, Neighborhood Associations
- [Consular Corps \(LA, Sacramento, San Diego, SF, Country Contacts\)](#)

OTHER LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Arts & Culture Partners
- Chamber of Commerce
- Education
- Entertainment Partners (ex: sports teams, nightlife, film)
- Healthcare
- Restaurant Associations
- Transportation agencies
- Travel Associations
- Union Partners



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***Your best ally is the representative's
assistant or scheduler!***

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Orchestra management skills (ex: development, marketing, season planning, etc.) all translate into advocacy work
- Learn about your city's / town's budget cycle and plan your asks/communication to align throughout the process
- Make sure to show up for public comment
- Consider how you can use an election year to highlight the needs of your local arts and culture community
 - SF Residents, Save the Date:
Mayoral Arts Town Hall Discussion – September 18
- Be aware of ethics rules ([SF new rules come into effect Oct 2024: Prop D ; CA state gift rules](#))
- Long lead time – both with policy and with relationships, you never know what it can grow into
- Speak out – “keep putting things in the water”
- Expressing THANKS is a powerful tool!

ADJUST YOUR THINKING

- Move out of the “Arts Box” into the “Civic Box” - Be a force for civic good beyond artistic offerings
- Move away from individual, transactional thinking to the broader ecosystem around you

REMINDER

- As a trusted civic group and a network of artists and audiences, you are already an advocacy leader

GET INVOLVED

- [ACSO, California For the Arts, CA Arts Advocates, the League of American Orchestras & more](#)
- Sign up for Advocacy Alerts
 - [California For the Arts: Subscribe \(everyaction.com\)](#)
 - [LOA Advocacy Action Today: NEA Funding Outreach](#)





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DISCUSSION: LOCAL ADVOCACY IN ACTION



BREAKOUT GROUPS / ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

TABLE 1: **Advocacy 101**

TABLE 2: **Working in Coalition for the Benefit of the Local Arts Ecosystem**

TABLE 3: **Arts & Culture Integration in Local Planning – Getting Involved**

TABLE 4: **Step Outside the “Arts Box” and into the “Civic-Minded Box”**

TABLE 5: **Advocacy Work = Community Work**



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REPORT OUTS / Q & A

RESOURCES

State Advocates

[Association of California Symphony Orchestras](#)

[CA Arts Advocates](#)

[California For the Arts](#)

[Create CA \(Arts Education\)](#)

[CA FWD](#)

Federal Advocates

[League of American Orchestras](#)

[Americans for the Arts](#)

[Recording Academy](#)

California For the Arts Toolkits

[Guide to Successful Advocacy](#)

[Navigating the Do's and Don'ts of Nonprofit Involvement in Electoral Activities](#)

[Rules of Engagement: Political Campaigning, Lobbying & Advocacy](#)

[Working with the Tools of Local Planning](#)

Economic Studies

[Americans for the Arts](#)

CA for Arts: [Arts & Economic Development One-Sheet](#)

Local Studies - [San Francisco](#)

[Otis Report \(CA Creative Economy\)](#)

[Otis Report – Creative Economy Tracker](#)

Regional Resources

[Arts for LA](#)

[San Diego – Art Matters](#)

[Arts for a Better Bay Area](#)

[Sacramento Alliance for Regional Arts](#)

[Bay Area Arts Together](#)

[Theatre Bay Area](#)

[California For the Arts Regional Conversations](#)

- Northern California Regional Conversation – Saturday, August 3: 4-6pm



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FINAL TAKE AWAYS



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SAVE THE DATE



April 22, 2025



April 23, 2025



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THANK YOU!

LENI BOORSTIN

[linkedin.com/in/leni-boorstin](https://www.linkedin.com/in/leni-boorstin)
leni.i.boorstin@gmail.com

MARNI COOK

[linkedin.com/in/marnicook](https://www.linkedin.com/in/marnicook)
mcook@sfsymphony.org

SEAN FENTON

[linkedin.com/in/sean-a-fenton](https://www.linkedin.com/in/sean-a-fenton)
www.theatrebayarea.org

JONATHON GLUS

[linkedin.com/in/jonathon-glus](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jonathon-glus)
www.sandiego.gov/arts-culture

TRACY HUDAK

[linkedin.com/in/tracy-hudak](https://www.linkedin.com/in/tracy-hudak)
tracy@caforthearts.org
www.caforthearts.org