



## **Dealing With the Economic Downturn**

### **January 2009**

It is becoming clearer that the declining U.S. economy is adversely affecting Colorado artists and cultural organizations. To help us better understand the impact of the economic downturn, we'd like to get a sense of any changes you've had to make in your programs and in the number of jobs in your organization. Please share the challenges you are facing and how you are dealing with them by sending an email to [elaine.mariner@state.co.us](mailto:elaine.mariner@state.co.us). Meanwhile, we've compiled some information and links to resources that might help you weather this difficult time.

#### **Federal Stimulus Efforts**

While the contents of the federal economic stimulus package remain unresolved, it is clear that funds will be provided to promote employment opportunities and support improvements to the national infrastructure. The following four federal assistance programs are likely to be part of the economic stimulus package:

- 1) Community Development Block Grants, which are available for construction and improvements to public facilities, neighborhood centers, and the like, and present a primary source of government funding for local arts institutions;
- 2) Public Works and Economic Development Program in the U.S. Department of Commerce, which supports the construction or rehabilitation of public infrastructure and facilities;
- 3) Transportation Enhancement grants through the U.S. Department of Transportation, which have been successfully used by state arts agencies in the past, are federally funded, community-based projects that improve the cultural, historic, aesthetic and environmental aspects of a transportation infrastructure; and
- 4) Rural Development program in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which offers support to state and local governments and nonprofit groups for community facilities, which includes cultural facilities.

Cultural organizations that can contribute significantly to job creation, workforce development and community revitalization might be eligible for support through these programs, but they must be explicitly identified in the final economic stimulus package. Arts advocates are encouraged to speak to their elected officials to ensure that nonprofit organizations and arts-related enterprises are included in the broader goals and objectives of a stimulus plan.

#### **State Stimulus Efforts**

Governor Ritter announced several job-creation and economic-development proposals for the upcoming 2009 legislative session including providing tax-credit incentives for companies that create at least 20 new jobs, providing small and family-owned businesses with immediate access to capital and credit through a Colorado Credit Reserve Program, and expanding Colorado First workforce training programs at community colleges. If approved by the legislature, these will be available after July 1, 2009. For-profit arts-related businesses would be eligible for the tax incentive programs, and all businesses, whether commercial or nonprofit, could potentially benefit from the expanded loan program.

## **Links to Resources**

Denver area cultural industry leaders are looking at how collaborative efforts might help shelter and grow individual organizations. They have launched an online space for sharing opportunities and success stories (<http://denverculturefeed.org/forum/14>), and will meet in clusters in January and explore collaborative marketing and programming together.

All public artists should consider belonging to the Public Art Network through Americans for the Arts. The list serve provides discussions on current topics of interest as well as Calls for Entry and there are a variety of other resources available. [www.artsusa.org/networks/public\\_art\\_network/default.asp](http://www.artsusa.org/networks/public_art_network/default.asp)

Americans for the Arts has created a Funding Response and Readiness Kit to help cultural organizations make the case for continued arts funding from state and local governments and foundations. [www.artsusa.org/information\\_services/toolkit/default.asp](http://www.artsusa.org/information_services/toolkit/default.asp)

## **Leadership Luncheon**

Colorado Nonprofit Association is offering a Leadership Luncheon on "Strategic Decisions to Sustain Your Organization", Tuesday, January 27th, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm, Red Lion Hotel Denver Central. For information and registration go to [www.coloradononprofits.org/leadershipluncheon/register.cfm](http://www.coloradononprofits.org/leadershipluncheon/register.cfm)

## **Computer Software and Hardware**

Techsoup Stock ([www.techsoup.org/stock/Default.asp?visit=1](http://www.techsoup.org/stock/Default.asp?visit=1)) offers software donations to nonprofits from 35 major technology providers, including Microsoft, Cisco, Intuit, and Adobe for an administrative fee as little as 5% of retail cost. To qualify, organizations must be a 501(c)3. The Refurbished Computer Initiative ([www.techsoup.org/stock/rci/default.asp?cg=searchterms&sg=Refurbished%20Computer%20Initiative](http://www.techsoup.org/stock/rci/default.asp?cg=searchterms&sg=Refurbished%20Computer%20Initiative)) gives nonprofits a chance to get low-cost, high-quality computers with a new operating system and up-to-date software covered by a 90-day warranty.

## **Tourism Events on Colorado.com**

You can post your public events on the brand new Colorado.com for free. Visit [www.ColoradoTourismPartner.com](http://www.ColoradoTourismPartner.com). Create an industry partners account by clicking Registration. Once an account has been established, you can add or change existing events. If you currently have an event listing you may already have an account. If you need help with log-in information or have other questions, contact John Daters at [jdaters@mmgworldwide.com](mailto:jdaters@mmgworldwide.com). If you are interested in upgrading your event listing with a photo and/or more detailed description for a small fee, contact Vicki Ottoson at [vickio@weaver-group.com](mailto:vickio@weaver-group.com).

## **Several web sites offer management advice to organizations faced with economic challenges.**

*A to Z Survival Guide for Uncertain Times* by Michael Seltzer from the blog, Philantopic  
<http://pndblog.typepad.com/pndblog/2008/10/the-a-to-z-nonp.html>

*Managing in Tough Times: 7 Steps* from the Bridgespan Group  
<http://www.bridgespan.org/LearningCenter/ResourceDetail.aspx?id=2638>

## **Three articles from Fieldstone Alliance:**

*When Times are Tough, Get Creative and Strategic*

[http://www.fieldstonealliance.org/client/tools\\_you\\_can\\_use/10-23-08\\_survive\\_tough\\_times.cfm](http://www.fieldstonealliance.org/client/tools_you_can_use/10-23-08_survive_tough_times.cfm)

*20 Emergency Funding Sources for Nonprofits*

[http://www.fieldstonealliance.org/client/tools\\_you\\_can\\_use/12-16-08\\_emergency\\_funding.cfm#20](http://www.fieldstonealliance.org/client/tools_you_can_use/12-16-08_emergency_funding.cfm#20)

*Opportunities in Lean Times*

[http://www.fieldstonealliance.org/client/focus\\_opportunities\\_in\\_lean\\_times.cfm](http://www.fieldstonealliance.org/client/focus_opportunities_in_lean_times.cfm)