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Trump Executive Order to Defund Institute of Museum and Library Services Means States Must Act to Preserve American Creativity, Knowledge, & Exceptionalism

New York, NY, March 20, 2025 —Today, [4A Arts - American Alliance of Artists and Audiences](#) - stands ready to counter the federal defunding of [Institute of Museum and Library Services \(IMLS\)](#) - by building a bigger army of arts advocates in all states to preserve the artistic creativity and knowledge that underpins America's most important soft power. IMLS awarded \$266.7M in grants to museums, libraries and cultural institutions across America, [including more than \\$160M to State Library Administrative Agencies](#) in 2024. **With the loss of millions of federal dollars per state, the need for state and local budgets to include support of museums, libraries, and all cultural institutions falls to elected officials at all levels.**

If state and local officials wish to preserve their communities' integrity, uniqueness, and character, those leaders must prioritize supporting the beloved museums, libraries and cultural institutions that make the lives of their constituents meaningful. Museums inspire the next great American inventors and developers to think in creative ways. Libraries distribute knowledge supporting a free, democratic, and literate population. These pillars of local communities craft American exceptionalism rooted in bold inventors and broad thinkers.

"4A Arts recognizes the next great challenge of 2025 will be the preservation of uniquely American local institutions that inspire creative thinking and provide a universal base of public knowledge: our museums and libraries," **said 4A Arts Executive Director Gavin Lodge.** "Defunding IMLS means states must pick up the pieces to preserve these assets that make America *American*. 4A Arts knows every American citizen sees the value of culture and knowledge in their state and local communities, **so we stand at the ready to support state arts advocacy organizations in building a bigger army of arts advocates.**"

Last year, 4A Arts founded its current initiative, "[Organizing for the Arts](#)" (O4A), implementing time-tested grassroots organizing techniques to transform citizens from arts consumers into arts advocates. The national arts advocacy community welcomes this first-of-its-kind initiative that focuses on the people who celebrate and experience the arts (American citizens) and takes the onus for advocacy off of artists. This program is currently in process with three state arts advocacy organizations (Arizona Citizens for the Arts, Missouri Citizens for the Arts and Florida Cultural Alliance) and seeks to replicate and scale for national impact.

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4A Arts is a 501(c)(3) that believes arts and culture are basic human rights and powerful tools for building a healthy society. As a nonprofit social movement, we seek to democratize, catalyze, and prioritize arts, culture, design, and craft in American society.