

A NATIONAL BLUEPRINT FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RELIEF AND RECOVERY FOR ARTISTS

Iteration #4

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Section I: Acknowledgements

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Section II: Background

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita took an immense toll on creative communities, cultural economies and artists' careers. In response, major arts service organizations, arts agencies, funders and individuals began a national dialogue about ways to help artists and cultural institutions prevent future losses caused by natural and manmade disasters.

This dialogue culminated in the convening of a summit of national arts leaders in March 2006 by the Craft Emergency Relief Fund (now known as CERF+) and Americans for the Arts. The gathering addressed the need to create a comprehensive emergency assistance system for artists before, during and after disasters.

In the months that followed, the summit participants formed the Coalition for Artists' Preparedness and Emergency Response. The Coalition's first action, under CERF+'s leadership, was to commission this Blueprint.

The Blueprint outlines the necessary steps for creating a national, coordinated system of emergency preparedness, relief and recovery for artists and the organizations that serve them.

Intended Audience

While drafted initially on behalf of artists, the Blueprint is designed to serve the entire arts sector, which exists on a continuum from individual artists to small, artist-centered groups and large arts organizations. The plan is also relevant for cultural managers and administrators.

We hope the Blueprint's proposal for new and improved systems of support will galvanize arts organizations at the local, state, regional and national levels to engage in emergency planning with artists and arts organizations.

Assumptions

1. There is a need for a comprehensive national system of assistance for artists and arts organizations that encompasses all phases of emergency assistance preparedness, relief and recovery.
2. This proposed system would supplement the services of existing relief agencies.
3. The arts community is best qualified to provide certain kinds of relief to artists and arts organizations.
4. The system is a network of networks designed to respond to geographic, political and cultural differences. It is national in scope with some form of centralized management and a sense of shared ownership, but it is dependent on local delivery and regional/state organizations.

5. Construction of a new infrastructure will entail enrollment of nonprofit and commercial entities that serve and/or have an interest in artists and arts organizations.
6. Public and private sector investment is needed to construct and sustain the system.
7. CERF+ is committed to playing a leadership role throughout the formative stage of this system as long as adequate funds are raised for administration and program development.

Section III: Making the Case for an Emergency System for Artists

Though government and private relief agencies help artists with immediate needs such as food, clothing and shelter when disastrous events occur, they mainly fall short of providing support for artists' professional needs.

Most relief system failures, so evident in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, affect people of comparable age, race, health, gender, geographic location and economic status similarly.

Certain gaps in services, however, affect artists and other self-employed individuals, uniquely. FEMA, for example, does not provide cash for any self-employed individuals whose tools of the trade have been lost or damaged, but it does provide this for those employed by others.

The arts community stepped in to fill these holes in the emergency safety net after hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Andrew; the Nisqually earthquake in Seattle; and September 11. Emergency relief groups like CERF+, NYFA, Artist Trust and others met artists' needs for materials, inventory, equipment and workspace. Without these unique relief efforts, many artists would have lost their ability to create and perform.

The Coalition wants to improve on these efforts by creating a coordinated support system that is in place prior to disasters and that meets the unique needs of artists and arts organizations nationwide.

The Blueprint has been created to:

- (A) ensure an organized system of response;
- (B) incorporate the lessons and best practices gleaned from past efforts;
- (C) avoid re-creating the wheel; and
- (D) curtail costs by focusing on preparedness and mitigation in addition to relief and recovery.

Section IV: System Readiness

Creating and Cultivating a System and Networks to Effectuate, as well as equitably Deliver, Response And Recovery to Artists and Arts Organizations Nationwide

A. WHAT IS THE IDEAL SYSTEM/NETWORK(S)?

An “Ideal System” should:

- Have national, regional, statewide and local efforts and coordination.
- Address all phases of emergencies, i.e. preparedness for emergencies, relief/response from emergencies, as well as recovery from them
- Have awareness of, and willingness to address, the long-term nature of recovery
- Emergency plans must be in place among responders before the need for them arises.
- Interact with and be supplemental to (rather than a replacement for), the extant relief system, e.g., FEMA, SBA, American Red Cross.
- Have financial, educational, informational (2-way flow), advocacy and service aspects. (SEE BELOW)
- Address personal and professional needs of artists
- Be redundant - to allow for system failure at any level, e.g., backup systems and means of communicating between local, regional and national partners.
- Have mutual aid and support (see below).
- Be flexible and responsive.
- Possess the ability to solicit, accept and disburse funds as quickly and simply as possible.
- Have good record-keeping, documentary, reporting and accountability mechanisms.
- Have on-the-ground human, as well as telephone and online components.
- Have state or other higher level coordination.
- Have local delivery mechanisms.

B. THERE NEEDS TO BE SOME KIND OF CENTRAL ENTITY

REASONS: Efficiency; accountability; oversight; coordination; support - financial and otherwise; information.

1. NEA needs to be a voice of support and a partner in advancing the cause.
 - Financially –
 - By educating Congress and other federal agencies such as FEMA, SBA and the Dept. of Labor about needed policy and other changes
 - By considering that agencies it funds have emergency plans in place in order to receive next round of funding

- By considering the appointment of an individual who is charged with responsibility for emergencies and disasters
 - Other?
2. During the formative stage, Coalition consensus is for the system to advance through Coalition effort with a formalized Steering Committee and working groups, as well as an operational steering force, the Craft Emergency Relief Fund. It should be considered whether there are parties that need to be at the table who have not been present yet, e.g., artists, other regional arts organizations, state arts agencies, private nonprofit arts organizations, and funders. The duties, obligations, and benefits of Coalition membership, financial and otherwise, as well as whether there should be different levels of membership, continue to be discussed.
 3. There is a need for a “buck stops here” party in both the formative and operational phases, but that party may be different in each phase and needs to be determined for the operational phase. CERF+ is playing this role during this formative period, but it needs funds for administration and program development.
 4. It is possible that an individual can be charged with some of these responsibilities. If so, the party to whom she/he reports, as well as salary, needs to be determined.

C. IMPLEMENTATION IDEAS AND STRATEGIES

1. Put forth a nationwide call to artist-service organizations, including arts agencies and funders to ascertain their interest in being a part of the national network and/or the local arts responder network and ask them to define the roles they’d like to/are capable of playing.
2. Map how artists access information at all levels (nationally, regionally, statewide and locally) so we can inform them of the network and the help available to them.
3. Map all of the regional, state and local arts agencies, arts funders, artist-run organizations and artist service organizations to understand who they are, what they do, their interactions, interest and commitment. Essential information to solicit includes: addresses, phone numbers, websites, executive directors, missions and programs.
4. Meticulously catalogue the needs to be met, both those that are unique to artists and those they share with other disaster victims. Sources currently meeting any of these needs should then be documented and all gaps and inadequacies highlighted.
5. Formalize and expand the mutual aid and support that have characterized past response efforts within the arts sector

- a. Create a “Resource Pool” of those organizations and agencies who’ve previously headed up disaster relief efforts for the arts community and can be called upon for consultations by those who haven’t.
 - b. Have regional arts agencies operate in support of the states, particularly in the event of multi-state disasters.
 - c. Formalize a back-up/go-to/buddy system for locales and states, e.g., if online systems are down in Florida, Mississippi steps in.
 - d. Compile a list of organizations willing to help and what they can help with, e.g., temporary housing and workspace from artist communities; alternative performance/exhibition opportunities when local markets collapse; VLAs (Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts organizations) representing artists who have been denied relief by FEMA, SBA and Dept. of Labor.
6. Create Artist Registries (to include name and contact information at a minimum): artists register in advance so that when disasters occur, finding where people are and who needs help can be proactive, not reactive. Should probably exist at least at the state and local levels. Should, for legal privacy reasons, be a matter of choice. Look to extant models. May be necessary to also amalgamate all the registries into a single secure database organized by state and, within states, by locales [a central repository of registries]. The physical location of this secure database should be in a geographic locale not particularly susceptible to power failure.
 7. Build an Individual Volunteer Network (i.e., individuals, including artists, willing and able to step in to help) – can be everything from skilled professionals that we reach out to specifically (mental health professionals, lawyers, doctors, conservators) to those who are willing to pitch in to clean-up, house people in need, donate instruments, etc.). Investigate working with AmeriCorps and other similar organizations (those that recruit volunteers nationwide to work with nonprofits) toward this end.
 8. Liaise and develop relationships with the extant agencies involved in relief, particularly FEMA, The Department of Labor (disaster unemployment insurance and other relief programs – see below) Small Business Administration, NVOAD (National Voluntary Organizations Involved in Disaster) and the state and local emergency management offices in order to make them aware of this network and the resources it provides for artists.
 - a. Actors Fund has already been doing this in the NY area, as well as nationally. Work through them to continue to build these relationships.
 - b. This serves at least two purposes: They can then refer artists in need to this network and its resources (and distribute those resources where appropriate) AND opening up the line of communication enables us to better advocate with them regarding artists’ needs in general (on a policy level) and in specific (when denials of relief happen).

9. Liaise and develop relationships with relevant private businesses/industries whose services or products are relevant and necessary to artist preparedness, relief or recovery
 - a. Goals - get them to participate, provide goods/services free or more cheaply, provide financial support (“B” below), step in when help is needed (either with donations in the case of emergencies or with discount pricing for preparedness)
 - b. Ideas about potential businesses to include: Insurance Industry; Supplies/suppliers for preparedness like Lowes, Home Depot; lumberyards; conservators; instrument makers (MusiCares and Jazz Foundation are already involved in this); art-specific suppliers and manufacturers, software and hardware developers.
10. Need to find/develop a national organization for visual artists that provides services comparable to what Actors Fund (along with MusiCares, and Jazz Foundation) provides nationwide for the performing artists and what CERF+ does –among other things--for craft artists, i.e., provide social services and counseling for them.

D. FINANCIAL RESOURCES (Funds are presently needed to ensure the formation of the system and will be needed in the future to support continuing administration and operation, as well as to aid artists impacted by disasters and emergencies.)

1. Extant and Ongoing Resources¹:
 - a. Private nonprofit sources who are Coalition members, including: CERF+, Actors Fund, MusiCares, Americans for the Arts, Jazz Foundation of America, Southern Arts Federation, and many others.
 - b. Private nonprofit sources, including those not currently members in the Coalition
 - c. Government Sources
 - NEA has helped before.
 - FEMA – but there is a need to advocate with FEMA to codify use of FEMA money for replacement of artist tools.
 - SBA – loans only. Cultivate relationship so we can advocate with them to systemically treat artists who earn income from their work as self-employed businesses. Problem here is the fact that artists often don’t have a consistent stream of income each year.
 - Department of Labor – Cultivate relationship so we can advocate regarding Disaster Unemployment Insurance, as well as systemic treatment of Workforce Recovery Act Funds for putting artists to work in recovery efforts post-disaster (the Mississippi Arts Commission was able

¹ Many, if not all, of these resources are listed in NYFA Source. If people are aware of resources not in NYFA Source they need to inform NYFA.

to hire two artists to help in recovery relief through this program), and Business Capitalization Program funds (Mississippi was also able to get \$5,000 grants + training in “Business 101” for over 200 artists through this program).

- State and local arts agencies – in some instances have been able to redirect resources to emergency relief.

2. New Resources:

- a. Explore the interest in and feasibility of a pooled income or mutual benefit fund. Accept charitable contributions for this purpose and/or investigate other options such as:
 - Artists pay in any amount now and on an ongoing basis as they choose in order to earn interest for future emergency needs, possibly even be able to collect principal at those times. No minimum deposit or contribution requirements. Possibly also accept work and copyrights in addition to cash and ascribe financial value to these.
 - Contact businesses such as TIAA/CREF to see if they could/would administer such a fund. If not, a fund administrator would be needed.
- b. Foundations and corporations: Develop a network of those willing to commit money for the purpose of building and sustaining the network; go to those who’ve helped in prior disasters and those who are part of the Coalition and explore these options:
 - Create a pooled fund for emergencies/disasters, especially for those foundations and corporations not currently engaged in providing relief to artists in disasters
 - Give a percentage relative to their total giving in a year when disaster relief is necessary
 - Put in place financial and in-kind support commitments now.
 - Create a Common Application Form that can be utilized by all.
- c. Look to federal, state and local legislative bodies – explore ways to generate funds directly e.g., in Florida after Hurricane Andrew, all taxes collected on goods purchased for hurricane relief were devoted to state recovery. The arts received over \$7 million dollars of these funds. Ability to receive significant funds may depend on the power of the locale lobbying for it: in Florida, it was Miami-Dade, which had a powerful lobbying bloc.
- d. State and local arts agencies –are there ways to generate new money?
- e. Utilize mechanisms like concerts, telethons, auctions, etc. to raise money.

E. NECESSARY ADVOCACY

1. Artists’ needs have often not been met by extant relief programs for various reasons. Many of the federal programs are not suited for artists. Advocacy has generally been done at the time of a disaster with local federal agency staff.

2. Advocacy needs to take place higher up the chain so that change can take place on a systemic level that carries through from disaster to disaster, not on an *ad hoc* basis.
3. Problems include:
 - FEMA does not provide artists or other self-employed people money for damaged tools used in their work, though it does provide funds for this purpose to individuals who are employed by others. FEMA only provides funds for necessary “personal expenses,” not “business expenses.” Because artists are considered self-employed businesspeople, whether they are earning income from their work or not, their tools of the trade are considered business expenses. These claims are referred to SBA for business relief in the form of loans.
 - SBA – artists are often daunted by the application process and have difficulties making the case for loans because of collateral problems and because many do not have regular income streams over the years. Need to advocate, among other things, to treat them like other groups of self-employed like farmers who also don’t have regular income streams.
4. In general, the unique situation of artists needs to be explained in order to make a case for funding from these and other federal agencies.

Section V: System Phases

A. ARTIST PREPAREDNESS

(for arts responder preparedness, see Relief/Response below)

1. Artists need to be empowered, educated and trained about how to prepare for and protect their artwork and artistic careers against disasters and emergencies.
2. Empowerment, education and training about how to prepare for and protect your artwork and artistic career in the face of a disaster should at least in part be accomplished by including it as part of general efforts to educate artists about protecting and documenting their work, concepts that have significant merit even outside the disaster context. Reasons: Collaboration with organizations already engaged in this work will lower costs and expand outreach possibilities; where disasters are only abstract possibilities, people often don’t perceive a need for education about how to prepare for them
3. Education and training about how to prepare for and protect your artwork and artistic career in the face of a disaster includes understanding how to mitigate the effects of a disaster.

4. Tools for Education:
 - a. CERF+'s *Studio Protector* – Wall Chart with companion web site <http://studioprotector.org> (NOTE: this is a tool that provides artists with a guide and checklist about how to prepare for and protect themselves and their artistic studios and work products against disaster)
 - b. Discipline-specific and other necessary adaptations of the *Studio Protector*, i.e. for performing artists
 - c. Workshops:
 - to be held way in advance of disasters to train artists who are not already thinking about these issues to think about them.
 - most needed in areas prone to disasters
 - create model workshops or curricula and/or provide teachers to locales
 - consider partnership with private industry, e.g., AXA Art Insurance, to sponsor/create/aid in the creation of/teach workshops
 - Consider distance learning/online versions
 - potential providers = CERF+, Actors Fund, arts agencies/councils, NYFA, Artist Trust, Creative Capital, FEMA, university arts training programs, other professional training programs.
 - potential topics for presentations at conferences: insurance; the Studio Protector and how to use it; mitigation (how to store your work and tools of your trade—discipline-specific?)
5. Issues to be covered:
 - a. The necessity for preparation and mitigation
 - b. How to protect your work, tools and workspace
 - c. How to make an emergency plan
 - d. Insurance
 - e. Documenting and storing work and valuable papers (or copies) offsite
 - f. Vital clauses to include in exhibition and performance contracts, e.g., “Acts of God” clauses.
 - g. Understanding the current government and private relief system and resources, how they can help you, how to maximize your chances of getting the relief you need from them, where there are gaps as far as artists’ needs are concerned and whether/if you can alter how you currently do your work in order to qualify for some of this relief (e.g., need to demonstrate income over a period of years to show you’re a small business in order to get SBA help)
6. Support and counseling to help artists implement what they’ve learned.

7. Cultivation of low(er)-cost providers for products/services related to preparedness, e.g., insurance, conservators, plastic sheeting
8. Build a volunteer network of service providers: The Actors Fund has much of this in place for artists connected to the performing/entertainment industry, as CERF+ does for craft artists. Determine if access to these service providers can be extended to visual artists or whether organizations that presently provide financial relief to visual artists in emergencies can expand their services to include this.
 - Create information sheets about each provider and/or a database and a way for artists to easily access them and their services.

B. RELIEF/RESPONSE IN THE FACE OF DISASTER

1. Create arts responder tool kit: what a responding organization needs to put in place, issues to consider, what an artist relief grant system should look like (fundamental components and ways to structure it), sample application guidelines and forms, etc. It should cover or speak to what follows:
2. Relief/Response Needs
 - a. Organizations who intend to be responders must make emergency plans for their organizations (and these must include addressing the emergency needs of their staff, as well as preparing their staff about how to help)
 - b. Assessment of field: need to find out how people are, where they are, who they are and what their needs are. To be accomplished in person on the ground when safe, via phone, e-mail and website. Have an Artist Registry in place before disaster next strikes in order to facilitate reaching out to people.
 - c. Set up a Hub through which information can flow, people can post their needs, people can provide aid (or let it be known that such aid exists and how to access it):
 - Determine if the hub is a portal or if matchmaking will be done between providers and artists in need .
 - Need online and phone components, but must also have an alternative means to communicate/reach out in event communication systems are shut down.
 - Re: Online component, go to locations like Omidyar Network, CraigsList or Wikipedia Foundation to see if they are willing to help create the system architecture for this or support its creation. Whatever architecture is created should be something that can be accessed by all the members of the Arts Responder Network when disaster strikes their local artists.
 - Artists should be able to post where they are and how they are if they want, but privacy needs to be assured to all that desire it.
 - Consider a chat-room component and assess if that's manageable

- Consider using Twitter and other developing social networking media. Monitor all developing media and assess their utility for this purpose.
- d. Along with an online component there needs to be a **person(s)** on the other end of the line that people can talk to and meet with. The human component is essential in this stage. Just knowing that someone is there and cares can make all the difference. Think about a 1-800 number.
 - e. Think about training people whose job it is to travel from disaster to disaster to assess impact on artists, mobilize the arts responder network, integrate its efforts into the larger disaster relief and advocacy communities and document the network's stories of success and failure so that the system can evolve and other locales can benefit from experience.
 - f. Consider whether the group that coordinates the hub is also the place that coordinates all relief-related efforts. This is possible but not required although there needs to be an entity that assumes role of overarching coordination.
 - g. It is important that this be a local group or one close-by since those within a locale best understand the needs of their community.
 - h. Provide a physical place for people to come for counseling/support or at least provide for some community meetings/gatherings.
 - i. Need to allow for the creativity of the moment to expand possibilities of what relief can look like, but this must be balanced against the need for efficiency, which having a system can achieve. It is not possible to prevent individuals and groups from stepping forward to help in the ways they want so this must be accepted and accommodated.
 - j. The network-building this Coalition is undertaking can build a "better mousetrap" by understanding in advance who wants to help in disasters, what they want to do and creating a system that integrates them and their desires into it.
 - k. Need to have advocates/liasons/translators for artists to help them deal with the extant relief system, make their best case, appeal denials, etc.
 - Actors Fund is doing this for those in the performing industry.
 - Consider whether the nationwide VLA (Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts) network should be recruited for this purpose.
 - Consider whether individuals can be trained to do this by those that have already done it.
 - Whoever does this needs to be trained in the extant relief system, its systemic limitations, the issues faced by artists in obtaining relief from it, and must establish working relationships with the local FEMA

coordinating executives in order to advocate for the field and individual artists.

- l. Need to educate artists about the relief system and how to access it: [See *An Artist's Guide to 9/11 Relief Efforts* written for the NYC Arts Coalition on behalf of the New York Arts Recovery Fund for an example. (<http://www.nyfa.org/level4.asp?id=58&fid=5&sid=9&tid=22>)
 - Print/online versions
 - Workshops
 - Personal support

- m. Provide a financial relief system for artists
 - Necessary to meet needs not otherwise being met by FEMA, SBA, Unemployment Insurance, etc. (in general includes costs associated with lost/damaged work, work opportunities, workspace, tools of the trade)
 - Need to establish criteria for who can receive aid, application system, evaluation system, and outreach system to let people know the relief exists.
 - Decide who will manage this. Government arts agencies are not always suited to do this because they may be bound by certain strictures.
 - Need, then, to locate other sources within states and locales. While there could be a national resource (and in case of CERF+ and MusiCares, e.g., and other discipline-specific funders, this works because they know their field), understanding the locale and the artists in it is vital to creating an efficient system.
 - Consider using community foundations. The vehicle chosen may differ from state to state.
 - Funds will need to be raised for this for this (see New Resources section above)

- n. Suggestions for financial relief system (much of this is drawn from experience with the New York Arts Recovery Fund)
 - Need, not merit-based, although some locales have looked to service to the community in evaluating to whom funds should be distributed.
 - Make it as simple a process as possible
 - Should be as minimally invasive of peoples' lives as possible, while ensuring that relief is equitably distributed (which means that sometimes you need to look at peoples' tax returns and have them ascribe a number value to their losses)
 - Who is qualified to apply for and receive support? Consider working professionals with track records, but they should not have to demonstrate earned income from artmaking/performing in recognition of the reality of many artists' lives. Address other questions such as: Are architects artists? What about fashion designers? Are there other fields about which there is less than universal agreement about their status as "artists?" Do full-time students qualify if they are also working artists, i.e., they exhibit, receive

grants, perform regularly outside the university? Should there be a minimum number of years or months residency in the locale in order to qualify? The definition of transient needs to be addressed. Consideration needs to be given to whether someone who is in a locale for artistic purposes and suffers losses related to a disaster while there should be able to apply for relief from the locale. Consider how to help those who, for whatever reason, live below the radar screen.

- Have staff evaluate applications and make recommendations to a panel which makes final award decisions. (NOTE: a panel would presumably be made up of artists and arts administrators in the locale)
 - Maintain and preserve all records
- o. Provide for and/or refer to appropriate social/mental and emotional health services
- Actors Fund, MusiCares, Jazz Foundation do this for performing artists
 - There is no overall provider within the arts field for visual artists.
- p. Employment and Disaster Unemployment Insurance – people may need jobs or unemployment insurance. Work with Mutual Aid Network, Dept. of Labor, and State, local and private agencies. As Mississippi did during Hurricane Katrina, see if it is possible to provide artists with employment to help in the recovery effort.
- q. Help with relocation when necessary and possible.
- r. For all of above, must work with the arts groups that work with artists of color, those outside the mainstream, older artists, etc. to reach them and ensure they get the help they need.

C. RECOVERY (after meeting immediate needs)

1. This is a long-term process; can last for years past the emergency.
2. Actors Fund, CERF+, MusicCares and other national organizations that provide emergency assistance within the arts field are positioned to play leading roles in the recovery phase because of their familiarity with and contacts within their fields. However, the Coalition must develop mechanisms to ensure that artists and arts organizations everywhere are aware of their services, know how to reach them, and that there is always on-the-ground presence in all locales meeting recovery needs.
3. Involves:
 - Employment/getting people back to work: their own work, temporary work, training them how to manage their careers and/or re-training them for new work. For these last two, collaborating with the Dept. of Labor and various

state, local and private job training programs can be vital. Career counseling will be involved.

- Mental & emotional health counseling
 - Rebuilding markets and cultivating alternative markets.
 - Providing continued financial support
 - Providing legal support as necessary – look to the VLA network for this or other pro bono service providers
 - Relocation – work with mutual aid network to accomplish this
4. Address the question of when recovery ends