



Abrams for the Arts

Stacey Abrams recognizes the intrinsic value of the arts and understands the power of the creative sector to revitalize communities and spur economic growth. Generating nearly \$20 billion in economic activity and 133,000 jobs in Georgia, the arts also attract talent and young professionals to the state, as well as cultural tourists from around the world.ⁱ

Abrams is singularly qualified and the most experienced candidate to foster the arts and creative industries in Georgia. Growing up in a working-poor family, Abrams' parents fostered lifelong opportunities for her by filling their home with books and enrolling her in a performing arts high school. She is the award-winning author of eight novels and a recent *New York Times*-reviewed memoir.

As Democratic Leader of the Georgia House, Abrams strongly supported the arts and giving greater voice to artists. She co-sponsored legislation to restructure the Georgia Council for the Arts, diversify the Council and ensure inclusion of professionals from the arts community. She co-sponsored legislation to expand local funding options for cultural organizations and cultural tourism projects (HB 1049 in 2010; HB 73 in 2011; HB 377 in 2011). As Deputy City Attorney for Atlanta, she drafted legislation and helped guide implementation of the Percent for Art program to improve local investments.

As governor, Abrams will prioritize arts education in public schools, expand public funding of the arts, and support nonprofits, individual artists, and the creative sector more broadly, including the film and music industries. Abrams knows that Georgia's diversity is our strength. As governor, she will promote the diverse, skilled workforce available in our state. A commitment to inclusion also means opposing discriminatory bills. Abrams has fought discriminatory laws and will veto any such legislation as governor.

1. Commit to Access, Inclusion, and Equity

Every Georgian deserves genuine access to the arts and to the quality of life and economic opportunities such access brings. As governor, Abrams will ensure communities benefit from critical investment in the arts and arts funding. We must foster places where people want to live, grow, and thrive, and the arts are integral to creating vibrant communities. For example, as governor, Abrams will connect arts

and culture to public projects through a statewide Percent for Art Program. One percent of state building costs will be dedicated to increase access to the arts and support Georgia artists. A majority of states, including several Southern states, have such programs, as do cities including Atlanta. These programs prioritize access to permanent and temporary art experiences in all its forms—visual arts, performance, film, and music.

2. Expand Arts Education

Georgia students should have access to quality arts education – regardless of zip code. Arts education is proven to improve student performance, increase motivation and esteem, and help close achievement gaps for students with special needs, low-income students, and ESL learners.ⁱⁱ We know the link between arts education and student success, yet budget cuts have led to a decline in arts programming and curricula. Almost half of Georgia school districts eliminated or cut arts and music programming following the Great Recession.ⁱⁱⁱ High-poverty and rural school districts are much less likely to offer arts classes.^{iv}

Abrams will increase K-12 investment with a focus on restoration of arts education throughout school systems. In addition, her child care platform proposes the Afterschool STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) Initiative, which will expand arts programming for school-age children across the state.

3. Restore Public Funding for the Arts to Pre-Recession Levels

Georgia puts fewer state dollars per person towards the arts than any other state except Kansas.^v Georgia cut investment during the recession, but now it is time to restore state funding of the arts. Funding for the Georgia Council for the Arts means more state grants to local arts nonprofits, economic growth and tourism, and better protection of our creative economy against potential federal funding cuts. Cost: \$3.8 million

4. Support Local Solutions Through Assistance for Artists, Creative Small Businesses, and Communities

A strong arts ecosystem depends on emerging artists and creative entrepreneurs who bring new talent and growth to the sector. These artists are small business owners who face typical challenges of other businesses, including access to capital. Yet, they also have unique issues, such as finding access to creative workspace. As governor, Abrams will establish the Creative Small Businesses Task Force to find solutions to these challenges and ensure our small business financing programs reach artists as well. Additionally, we will provide technical assistance to rural communities, in particular, so they can craft strong proposals to funding opportunities.

5. Continue to Foster the Film and Music Industry

Georgia is the number one location worldwide for feature film production. The phenomenal success of the film industry in Georgia is an example of industry and state government working together to drive economic growth and grow good-paying jobs for Georgians.

Abrams supports the booming film and music industries and commits to maintaining state support. In addition to tax credits, we must provide a skilled creative workforce to grow these valuable industries. Abrams will focus on expanding access to training and participation into disadvantaged communities. Under her leadership, Georgia will increase access to training avenues such as apprenticeships with labor, matriculation at the Georgia Film School and expanded technical training and college degree programs focused on the arts and entertainment sector. More diversified and inclusive access will improve affordability, retention, and completion, and efforts will focus statewide.

ⁱ <https://www.arts.gov/artistic-fields/research-analysis/arts-data-profiles/arts-data-profile-17>

ⁱⁱ <https://nasaa-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/WhyGovSupport-1.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://gbpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/GBPI-People-Powered-Prosperity.pdf>. 46% of districts eliminated or cut such programming between 2009 and 2014.

^{iv} <http://www.georgia.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/ALTF-Report-Final-with-links-revised.pdf>

^v <https://nasaa-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/NASAA-FY2018-SAA-Revenues-Report.pdf>