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Top Ten Web Resources for Arts and Culture Leaders

Summer is almost here. Time for outdoor concerts, arts festivals, summer stock, and the Arts Consulting Group (ACG) annual list of the top ten free web resources for arts and culture leaders. Here are ACG's recommendations to bookmark for your travel and leisure reading.

1. Once again, **Americans for the Arts** appears on this list for its continued creative resources. With invaluable features such as the *Arts & Economic Prosperity* reports and the *Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts* reports, this [site](#) has hard data on the impact both for-profit and nonprofit arts organizations have on communities across the United States. Available by state, county, or district, these free reports pull data compiled by Dun & Bradstreet to create customized PDFs offering concise information on the economic impact the arts has on a specific area. In addition to economic impact information, reports include employment data and maps indicating the location of each arts organization or business in the region. As of January 2015, Americans for the Arts reported that the creation and distribution of the arts has created 702,771 businesses and employs 2.9 million people nationally.
2. Cleveland's **Community Partnership for Arts and Culture** offers online tools regarding capacity building programs and services for arts and culture nonprofits, research about the arts and culture sector, and counsel and guidance about public policy. The [website](#) features a Reference Desk that highlights topics such as sponsorship, hiring a consultant, and sample brand and style guides.
3. **Free Management LibrarySM** is a collaborative effort by a number of entities covering nearly every aspect of effective management. Its library of board governance resources is particularly comprehensive and well organized, providing an indispensable compendium of nuts-and-bolts information, including fact sheets, forms, sample policies, board manuals, and other tools. This [site](#) continues to be the web's single best source of free information on all aspects of nonprofit operations. Select from a wide variety of topics such career development, employee wellness, meeting management, and more.
4. **GuideStar** has long been the internet's most visited source for researching detailed information about specific nonprofit organizations. Compiled from IRS 990 forms, an organization can update its basic, publicly available profile with supplemental information that can promote and strengthen its brand and make its mission far more visible to potential funders. Click [here](#) to register for GuideStar Basic, the organization's free membership tier, to gain access to more than 2 million nonprofit profiles. For monthly or yearly fees, GuideStar Premium and GuideStar Pro members can enjoy additional features such as advanced search filters by expenses and assets, nonprofit leaders and employees by name, and the ability to download in-depth financial data for up to five thousand organizations each month.
5. Within the last ten years several crowdfunding websites have emerged, including GoFundMe, Indiegogo, and Razoo. And while no site is dedicated exclusively to crowdfunding within the arts and culture sector, **Kickstarter** focuses on a variety solely on creative projects in categories such as dance, film & video, photography, and theater in addition to technology, games, and journalism. According to its [website](#), more than ten million people have backed a Kickstarter

project. Its user-friendly features and homepage further enhances the impact a project can make on local audiences and potential community collaborators.

6. Launched in 2014, the **National Endowment for the Arts** continues its series of webinars outlining procedures and offering tips for grant application preparation processes. Less than an hour each, these presentations are customized by artistic field and include invaluable information regarding guidelines for presenting the best possible fundraising case to the Endowment. Recent webinar topics have included the *Arts & Human Development Task Force* webinar, which introduced a new funding opportunity, and the *Blue Star Museums* webinar, which discussed the membership benefits of this military appreciation program. Click [here](#) for the full archive of webinars.
7. In existence since 2012, Southern Methodist University's **National Center for Arts Research (NCAR)** offers arts and cultural leaders with resources and reports to help overcome challenges and increase impact. Its robust [website](#) covers topics such as contributed and earned income, marketing impact, and managing the bottom line. Additionally, the annual *NCAR Report* provides evidence-based insights into the health of arts and culture organization in the United States.
8. Michigan-based **Nonprofit Good Practice Guide** provides hands-on tips and concise information on a broad range of principles and practices topics from basic infrastructure and communication to financial management and strategic alliances. Each subject has a variety of blog posts with helpful tools and discussions. Visit the Nonprofit Good Practice Guide's [website](#) to view current topics.
9. The **Performing Arts Alliance** provides excellent advocacy tools for cultural organizations and individuals, including detailed recommendations on arts policy and current updates on pending arts legislation. The site's *Arts Advocacy Issue Center* provides overviews and analysis on topics ranging from federal funding for arts education to international artist visa processing. This section also includes a *Take Action Now!* button which currently allows arts advocates to submit a letter to the Senate about the Arts Requires Timely Service Act (ARTS), requesting artist visas be processed within a reasonable timeframe. Click [here](#) to explore the Performing Arts Alliance website.
10. **Volunteer Match**, a source for teaming volunteers with nonprofit organizations, is packed with helpful advice for governance leaders and volunteer managers. Its Learning Center offers webinars on advanced topics such as successful volunteer interview strategies and engaging pro bono and skills-based volunteers. In the past decade, the organization has paired more than four million people willing to contribute their time with organizations eager to tap their skills. Nonprofit organizations can register [online](#) and then submit descriptions of volunteer positions, promoting the organization to a wide, engaged audience.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Although a fee is required to access most of its information, organizations should become familiar with **BoardSource**, hosted by the National Center for Nonprofit Boards. The [site](#) is dedicated to magnifying impact by helping increase board and staff leader effectiveness.

Finally, Arts Consulting Group has its free online [Arts Insights](#) archive featuring articles on a variety of topics. Visit ACG's website to review previous issues and sign up for a free monthly [e-subscription!](#)

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