

Metropolitan Regional Arts Council  
**BIENNIAL PLAN**  
2008 / 2009 Biennium

*For further information contact:*

Metropolitan Regional Arts Council  
2324 University Ave W  
Suite 114  
Saint Paul, MN 55114  
651-642-0402  
[mrac@mrac.org](mailto:mrac@mrac.org)

# Table of Contents

## Components of MRAC's FY2008/2009 Biennial Plan

<u>Components of MRAC's FY2008/2009 Biennial Plan</u>	<u>Page</u>
MRAC's Strategic Road Map – years 2008 - 2009	1
Mandate, vision, mission, goals, organizational beliefs, priorities, success factors, measurements and evaluation	
Major Activities FY08/09	4
Criteria for MRAC operations and grantmaking	5
Needs assessment and planning process	6
External/constituent needs assessment	6
Internal/organizational assessment	7
2008/2009 Biennial Work Plan	8
Grant programs	8
Technical services supporting grant programs	10
Non-grant programs and services	11
Arts advocacy, education and leadership	12
Strengthening MRAC's infrastructure	13

## Where to find the Biennial Plan requirements

<u>Where to find the Biennial Plan requirements</u>	<u>Page</u>
Mission statement	1
Needs assessment	6
Description of planning process	6, Attch. B
Public meeting	8
Work plan/description of programs and services	4, 8
Bylaws	Attch. F
Board membership	Attch. F
Staff job descriptions	Attch. H
Rotation system for board members	Attch. F
Names and affiliations of board	Attch. G
Staff job descriptions	Attch. H
Board recruitment process	Attch. F
Budget	Attch. A
Grant making and monitoring process	Attch. F

## ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft Biennial Budget FY2008/2009
- B. Biennial Planning Process and Timetable
- C. Program Information
- D. MRAC Program Guidelines
- E. Grant Administration and Panel Review Materials
- F. By-laws, Policies and Procedures
- G. Board of Directors
- H. Staff Job Descriptions and Staff List

# MRAC Strategic Road Map - FY2008 / 2009

## Legislative Mandate

The Metropolitan Regional Arts Council (MRAC) is one of eleven Regional Arts Councils designated by the State of Minnesota “to make final decisions on the use of appropriations for local/regional arts development”. MRAC is designated to serve the seven-county metropolitan area (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties) and is charged to assess regional needs and to plan and administer programs and services using its legislative allocation.

## MRAC Vision



## MRAC Mission

The Metropolitan Regional Arts Council promotes incorporation of the arts into the daily lives of all communities by providing leadership, advocacy, grants and service.

## MRAC Goals

- \* MRAC continues to serve the artistic, cultural and geographic diversity of the metro area through grants and services.
- \* MRAC is instrumental in helping communities view arts and arts organizations as essential community resources.
- \* MRAC is recognized for its contribution to increasing public awareness of and support for the arts.

## Organizational Beliefs

We believe the arts are an expression of our innate creativity and innermost humanity and that the arts are essential to the lifelong development of individuals.

We believe that by ensuring equal access to and equity in the distribution of cultural resources we can ensure that all people have the opportunity to engage in the arts.

We believe that communities, societies and cultures are communicated and commemorated through artistic expression.

We believe diversity of expression and opinions are core American values, and by participating in the arts, we bring these values to life.

We believe the arts are essential to the creation and sustenance of thriving, vital communities.

## Criteria for MRAC Operations and Grant Review

The Metropolitan Regional Arts Council will reflect the following criteria, each of equal importance, in its governance, operations, staffing, programming, grant making, communications and publications:

- \* Ability and accountability
- \* Access
- \* Artistic challenge
- \* Artistic quality and merit
- \* Diversity
- \* Community need

## MRAC Priorities and Thrusts

- \* Maintain current level of institutional programs and services and focus additional human and financial resources on programs and services to reach new applicants and underrepresented communities.
- \* Focus resources on strengthening organizations so they will be better able to do their work.
- \* Maximize opportunities to cost effectively serve more constituents.
- \* Focus resources on strengthening infrastructure of community based organizations that serve a community arts convening and coordinating role.



# MRAC Strategic Road Map - FY2008 / 2009

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Vision</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Art is integrated into the social fabric and identity of every community</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Critical Success Factors</b></p> <p>A) MRAC develops and nurtures relationships, coalitions and networks that share the goal of increasing local arts engagement and community vitality</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Key Measures for FY08</b></p> <p>1) Number of new Local Arts Agencies, arts active community eds, and park and recs involved with MRAC increases over FY07 level</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Measurement Tools</b></p> <p>* data base</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Long Term Goal</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>MRAC is instrumental in helping communities view arts and arts organizations as essential community resources</b></p>	<p>B) MRAC's board of directors and panelists are representative of the constituencies that we are committed to serving</p>	<p>1) Number of individuals known to be from underrepresented communities in the panelist data base and on panels increases</p> <p>2) There is a board member from every county</p>	<p>* panelist data base * panel rosters * board roster</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Vision</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Public value of the arts is understood, acknowledged and acted upon by community members, leaders and policy makers</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Critical Success Factors</b></p> <p>A) MRAC and its constituents are actively involved in advocacy efforts and have the tools they need to speak on behalf of the arts in their lives and the lives of their communities</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Key Measures for FY08</b></p> <p>1) Number of staff and constituent interactions with legislators increases from FY07 level</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Measurement Tools</b></p> <p>* grantee letters to legislators * constituent participation in Advocacy Day * constituent participation in Desktop Lobbyist * grantee / legislator involvement in Big Check</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Long Term Goal</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>MRAC is recognized for its contribution to increasing public awareness and support for the arts</b></p>	<p>B) MRAC contributes to public policy planning and implementation at the local and state level</p> <p>C) Individuals are informed about the impact and public value of MRAC</p>	<p>1) Staff is "at the table" for local and state discussions about arts policy the same or more times than FY07</p> <p>1) MRAC develops tactics and tools to communicate its impact in public value</p>	<p>1) MCA board attendance 2) RAC Forum interactions 3) public speaking and panel participation activities</p> <p>1) to be determined</p>

## MRAC Major Activities for FY2008 / 2009

### **Application services and grants to support arts activities**

Arts Activities Support grants  
Community Arts grants  
Special Initiatives - Community Education Partnerships  
Special Initiatives - New Immigrant Communities  
New Immigrant Block Grant Initiative  
Grant application workshops  
One-on-one grant consultation  
Panelist training

### **Applicant services and grants for organizational capacity building**

Organizational Development grants  
Capital grants  
Management Consulting Fund grants  
Management Training Fund grants  
Grant application workshops  
One-on-one grant consultation  
Panelist training

### **Capacity building programs and services**

(Services listed are for FY07. FY08/09 programs are in planning stage, but will be similar)  
Staff consultation - one-on-one and with organization boards (all MRAC staff involved)  
Three different Peer Learning groups (open by application)  
Three-part series on financial basics, budgeting and cash management  
Quarterly gatherings of local arts agencies/ community art centers  
Arts participation workshops (2)  
Convenings of artists/ organizations of color (3)  
Community Education/ Park and Recreation day-long gathering

### **Advocacy and arts policy development**

Legislator "big check" events  
Public speaking/ presenting focused on arts development, community and economic development, and public policy  
Legislative testimony  
Constituent organizing around advocacy

## Criteria for MRAC Operations & Grantmaking

The Metropolitan Regional Arts Council will reflect the following criteria, each of equal importance, in its governance, operations, staffing, programming, grant making, communications and publications.

### **ABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

As an agency operating with taxpayers' money, we are accountable to residents of the seven-county area and the State of Minnesota to use our resources wisely. It is our responsibility to understand the needs of arts organizations as well as ways that the arts can contribute to healthy communities, to develop programs and services to respond to those needs, and to distribute resources efficiently and equitably. We are committed to clarity and openness in all communications and interactions with our constituents and colleagues so that our intentions and values are understood. When awarding grant funds, we will use a grant making system based on high ethical standards and an open review process. As a grant maker we value, encourage and support projects of high artistic quality that are well planned and that expend grant funds in a fiscally responsible manner. As an employer we encourage training and professional development opportunities for MRAC staff as a way of retaining an excellent workforce that is enthusiastic about meeting the needs of MRAC and its constituents and the expectations of MRAC's mandate.

### **ACCESS**

We believe that no person interested in the arts should be prevented from participating because of economic status or geographic, physical, mental, societal or cultural barriers. Therefore, we value, encourage and support projects that are open, inclusive, accessible and welcoming to anyone who may wish to participate. As an agency, we are committed to ensuring that our programs and services are accessible to all by assuming a proactive approach in identifying and serving constituents and by projecting an attitude of courtesy and respect in all of our internal and external relationships.

Because the primary source of MRAC funds is public money from the Minnesota Legislature, MRAC expects that all organizations receiving funds will work toward ensuring that the needs of people with disabilities will be accommodated in the project's process or final product.

### **ARTISTIC CHALLENGE**

We believe that an essential source of creative experimentation is to be found in the projects of small arts groups, community groups and collaborations between artists. These projects have the flexibility and freedom to reach audiences within their own communities, to support emerging artists and arts organizations, and to encourage artists to experiment with new forms of creative expression. We value, encourage and support projects that are artistically challenging for the artists and audiences they serve, and we defend the artist's right to freedom of expression. As an agency, we experiment with new programs and services in an attempt to meet constituent needs, institutionalizing those programs that succeed and learning from those that do not.

## **ARTISTIC QUALITY AND MERIT**

We value excellence both in the work done by our agency and as a critical component of the artistic projects we support. We believe that perceptions of artistic quality may change over time and over the diverse spectrum of creative activity in the metropolitan area. We will seek out and reward creative efforts of high artistic integrity that stand out among similar efforts. We value artists as central in the creation of artwork, and we support artists by providing funding for arts projects where artists are central to the work.

## **DIVERSITY**

We believe that artistic expression takes many forms and that the artistic and cultural diversity represented in MRAC's service region is what makes it so artistically rich and vibrant. MRAC's resources will serve all artistic disciplines and activities, ranging from professional arts organizations, to one-time artistic projects, to community based arts groups. When defining cultural diversity, MRAC considers many factors including: age; cultural, ethnic and racial differences; physical and mental abilities; economic status; gender; sexual orientation; and geography. As an organization, we wish to honor and reflect diversity in our staff, board, programming and grant making. It is MRAC staff's responsibility to ensure that our grant applicants, grantees and service users reflect the diversity of the seven-county area.

Because the primary source of MRAC funds is public money from the Minnesota Legislature, MRAC requires that any project receiving funds must, within its process or final product, work to embrace the diversity of its community.

## **COMMUNITY NEED**

As an agency, we are committed to serving the seven-county area by assessing needs, securing and allocating resources, and developing programs and services to meet the most critical needs of our constituency within the limitations of available resources. We encourage and reward projects that are clearly supported and valued by the communities they serve for the contributions they make to the arts and the lives of those communities.

# Needs Assessment and Planning Process

## **EXTERNAL/CONSTITUENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

### Informal Assessment Activities

MRAC gathers information about constituent needs and issues through: one-on-one meetings; written communication; staff/board interaction in the community; staff participation in community workshops and forums; feedback from panelists, applicants and grantees; open participation in board and staff meetings; and attention to local, state and national trends. This information is regularly assessed, critical issues are addressed as quickly as possible, and other issues are noted for consideration during MRAC's biennial planning process.

### Formal Assessment Activities

MRAC invites constituents to participate directly in its planning and information gathering process through forums, public meetings, written evaluations and assessments, and constituent e-mail comments. Meetings are documented and the results are circulated to staff, board and participating constituents.



For the FY2008/09 biennial plan MRAC's major assessment activities took place in late 2006 and throughout March 2007. MRAC conducted a constituent survey via SurveyMonkey that provided information about MRAC grants and services and their relevance to constituents' needs, as well as information about what the field would like MRAC to do in the future. In addition, following every grant deadline applicants received a customer satisfaction survey via Survey Monkey that measured constituents' use of support services and overall satisfaction with MRAC's grant making process. Following every MRAC training session or convening participants were also sent a follow up survey asking similar questions. The following themes were repeated throughout MRAC's assessment activities:

1. Needs/concerns of the field:
  - Need for increased funding – project support and general operating support
  - Support for staffing, in particular, assistance helping to hire an organization's first staff member
  - Networking opportunities to eliminate isolation and provide peer support and learning
  - More MRAC grants - many groups reported being stretched too thin to apply for grants unless there was a high probability of getting funded
  - More training opportunities on specific topics
  - Could MRAC serve a "convening role" for specific kinds of networking?
  - Reductions in MRAC staff time resulted in reduced access to one-on-one services and was a loss to constituents.
  
2. Assessment of "How is MRAC Doing"?:
  - Constituents gave high marks to MRAC staff, the organization's grant review / management process, and the breadth of training and support services available
  - MRAC's Arts Activity Support deadlines do not "sync" well with most organizations' planning/performance timetables, and it is difficult having only one Organizational Development and Capital deadline per year

## **INTERNAL ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING PROCESS**

### Identification of Strengths, Opportunities and Challenges

The 2008/2009 planning process included a board / staff retreat, numerous staff in-service work hours and a retreat, and evaluations of staff programs, policies and procedures. Biennial planning issues were included in the board agenda from November 2006 through April 2007. Using information from constituent needs assessments and input from staff and board, MRAC identified organizational priorities for the biennium.

An integral part of the biennial planning process was the review and updating of MRAC's strategic plan called MRAC's Strategic Road Map. The plan was developed in late FY05 to cover the period FY2006 – 09. Modifications and updates were made to the plan for the final two years, 2008 and 2009. It is incorporated into this document because it provides a succinct look at MRAC's vision, goals, strategies, and success measures for the FY2008/09 biennium.

### Biennial Planning Timetable

Attachment B, MRAC Biennial Planning Timetable, provides a sequential look at MRAC's biennial planning process. It includes the dates for parts of the plan required by Rules 1900.

Constituents were notified of all public meetings and the availability of the MRAC plan document through MRAC's website, [www.mrac.org](http://www.mrac.org), and through e-mail notification. Through MRAC's newsletter constituents received a written invitation to participate in the "Open Mike" and public meeting in February 2007. The May 2007 newsletter informed participants about where they could review the draft biennial plan and invited their comments to MRAC via phone, e-mail, or participation in the May public hearing.

MRAC's draft biennial plan was available for review beginning April 26, 2007 in MRAC offices and via MRAC's website, [www.mrac.org](http://www.mrac.org).

The May 9, 2007 meeting at the MRAC offices served as MRAC's public hearing as required by Rules 1900. It was an advertised and open meeting for constituents to provide feedback about the preliminary biennial plan prior to the plan's submission to the MSAB.

## Policy and Procedure Review and Revisions

MRAC uses its biennial planning process as an opportunity to assess programs and services and to review and update internal and external policies based on changes in the field, constituent feedback, staff and board discussions, and input from partners, collaborators and leaders in the field.

There are no policy / procedure changes planned for the FY08/09 biennium.

## 2008 / 2009 Biennial Work Plan

### GRANT PROGRAMS

In addition to the following information, documents about MRAC's grant programs (program descriptions, eligibility requirements, review criteria, programming timetable, panel policies and procedures, sample program guidelines) can be found in the attachments to this plan. FY08 guidelines are in process.

Each of MRAC's grant programs, targeted to meet specific constituent needs, has its own specific eligibility requirements. All grant requests are evaluated using a review process specific to the needs of the individual grant program, however, each review process uses the following review criteria: artistic quality, ability, community need, diversity, access and artistic/organizational challenge. In the 2008/2009 biennium, MRAC will offer ten different grant programs:

- Arts Activity Support Grants (AAS)  
AAS has been a core MRAC program for many years providing grants of up to \$7,500 to support arts projects in all disciplines. Applicants may receive one grant per MRAC fiscal year. A group is not eligible to receive a new AAS grant until its previous grant project has been completed and a final report approved.

- Community Arts Grants (CA)

The Community Arts Program was designed to serve arts projects of community and volunteer-based groups, small established groups, newly formed and first-time initiatives, and non-arts groups with arts programs. The program encourages collaborative efforts between community groups, artists and arts organizations.

In an effort to be more accessible to groups outside the core cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, this program differs in a significant way from other MRAC programs. When its annual budget is established, the MRAC board commits a block of funds to each county, including suburban Hennepin and Ramsey. Grant applications are reviewed with panelists from each county. When funds are awarded, applicants only compete with other groups from their county.

Community Arts grantees may receive one grant of up to \$3,000 per year with the exception of some non-arts organizations (refer to CA guidelines, section “Eligible non-arts organizations and community education units”). A significant portion of the funds awarded as Community Arts grants outside the core cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul are underwritten by a grant from The McKnight Foundation. This funding is committed through FY08. We have every reason to believe that funding will continue after that date.

- Organizational Development (OD)

This program provides grants of up to \$6,000 for projects designed to strengthen the management and/or infrastructure of nonprofit arts groups and “stand-alone” arts groups within nonprofit, non-arts agencies. Funded projects must: 1) advance the mission of the group and 2) have the potential for significant or long-term impact. Funds may be used to create and/or implement a project in areas such as strategic planning, financial planning or management, board development, governance, volunteer management, audience development, resource development, and access for people with disabilities. The McKnight Foundation grant helps to fund Organizational Development grants for groups located outside the core cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

- Capital Grants (CAP)

The Capital Grants program provides funds of up to \$6,000 to nonprofit arts groups and “stand-alone” arts programs within nonprofit, non-arts agencies to purchase equipment and related supplies and services, or to make capital improvements. Capital grant applications must show evidence that thorough planning has taken place and that receipt of the grant will: 1) advance the mission of the group and 2) have the potential for significant or long-term impact. The McKnight Foundation helps to fund Capital projects of groups located outside the core cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

- Management Consulting Fund (MCF)

This program was designed to give small and mid-size arts groups the funding to hire experienced facilitators and consultants to help with a very focused organizational issue. Access to outside consultants can be a critical first step for these groups and often enables them to construct a project that will later be eligible for funding with an OD grant. The McKnight Foundation helps to fund MCF grants for groups located in the greater metro area. The maximum grant size is \$1,000. Minneapolis/St. Paul groups may receive one

grant per year and greater metro groups may receive two grants per year. The program has monthly deadlines and is a staff-managed fund.

- Management Training Fund

This program is intended to enhance the management capacity, growth and development of nonprofit arts groups with budgets under \$300,000 by providing training funds for staff and volunteers to attend management workshops, seminars or conferences. Applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Groups with budgets under \$100,000 may request 100 percent of the training cost per event; groups with expenses over \$100,000 may request up to 75 percent of the training cost. The McKnight Foundation grant helps to fund Management Training Fund awards in the greater metro area.

- Emergency Accessibility

The Emergency Accessibility program provides grants of up to \$600 to encourage and support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in arts activities and in the work of arts organizations. Funds may be used for one-time emergency costs that enable a group to accommodate artists, audience members, volunteers or staff with disabilities.

- New Immigrant Communities and Municipal Challenge Grants (Special Initiatives)

In FY2002 MRAC experimented with initiatives targeted to the greater metro area and new immigrant artists. These partnerships were built around the theme “jump-start the arts”. Partnerships included individuals and agencies that shared MRAC’s goals and who could provide expertise and community organizing in specific areas where MRAC is interested in learning how to better serve targeted audiences.

The learning from these early efforts helped shape two current multi-year grant programs. The first program focuses on better serving greater metro communities through partnerships with community education and municipal governments. The second initiative partners with agencies working with new immigrants. Both grant programs enable a community agency to serve their constituencies by responding to demand for arts programming in a flexible and timely manner. It is anticipated that grantees will receive second and third year continuation funds. Both of these programs provide opportunities for MRAC to learn more about the needs and interests of suburban and new American arts audiences and how MRAC can more effectively serve them. Attachment D-1-h provides more detail about these programs.

- New Immigrant Block Grant Initiative

In FY08 MRAC will initiate a grant program designed to nurture and support meritable projects from new immigrant communities when the applicants are clearly struggling with cultural and language barriers in MRAC’s application process. The program will begin in fall 2007. Program detail can be found in attachment D-8-b.

## **TECHNICAL SERVICES SUPPORTING MRAC’S GRANT PROGRAMS**

MRAC will offer a minimum of 30 grant writing workshops during the 2008/2009 biennium. These two-hour workshops are designed to cover the fundamentals of preparing an effective MRAC application. Multiple workshops will be held at accessible locations throughout the metropolitan area prior to each grant round for major programs (Arts Activity Support,

Community Arts, Organizational Development, and Capital). In addition to grant writing workshops, MRAC staff will do a “pre-panel reading” of applications from groups that are new to a grant program or that have received fewer than two grant awards in the program for which they are seeking funding.

### **NON-GRANT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

Because MRAC’s human and financial resources are limited, MRAC will creatively allocate its resources—including its staff, partnerships, and materials—in “non-monetary” ways that will further the development of stronger arts communities, especially in targeted communities. MRAC plans its workshops and training activities in response to constituent needs. The activities take place at community sites throughout the metro area and almost all of the activities are delivered at no cost to the participants.

#### Training Services and Learning Opportunities

In the 2008/09 biennium, MRAC will offer, individually and in partnership with other organizations, networking and training opportunities in response to community needs.

While training activities are still in the planning stages for FY2008/09, major areas of focus will continue to be audience development/participation, leadership, organizational development, and financial management. They will be similar to or a continuation of FY07 activities such as those described below:

1. Audience development/ arts participation – MRAC will offer its training program *From Mission to Motivation: a Focused Approach to Increased Arts Participation*. We will experiment with different locations and groupings of constituents.
2. Peer Learning – MRAC is in its fourth year of offering “group learning opportunities” which provide group education and dialogue around a commonly identified issue. Groups apply for one of the six “slots” in this program, which takes place over a period of six to eight weeks. In addition to facilitating the group discussions, consultants meet with each individual organization to discuss the work plans that grow out of the group sessions. The three Peer Learning groups offered in FY07 focused on strategic planning, financial management, and fund development.
3. Workshops – recent examples of MRAC’s responses to constituent needs range from sessions on “building relationships across cultural boundaries” to “Advocacy 101” to “Growing your Organization: Financial Management for Small Organizations”.
4. One-on-one consultation – MRAC will continue to offer one-on-one consultation with constituents, which they have told us, is a particularly valuable service.
5. MRAC staff will continue to respond to requests to serve as speakers, panelists, and consultants on issues of importance to constituents and small arts groups. Services provided outside of MRAC’s region are expected to cover the real costs of the service delivery.

### Publications – Written and Electronic

MRAC develops publications for two purposes: 1) to inform constituents about programs and services and to assist them in using these services effectively; and 2) to meet a community need for information that is not being met by others in the field. Examples of the first include guidelines and institutional brochures. The second are publications and resource material such as MRAC's *ADA Access Guide*, *Working with American Sign Language Interpreters*, *A New Angle – Arts Development in the Suburbs*, and *From Mission to Motivation: a Focused Approach to Increased Arts Participation*. MRAC's most recent report published in FY2006 *Thriving Arts: Thriving Small Communities* has been well received and adds an important piece to the literature in the field. When appropriate, publications are available in both print and electronic formats.

1. MRAC Web Site – MRAC's Web site, [www.mrac.org](http://www.mrac.org), informs visitors about MRAC's mission, grant programs, deadlines and workshops; introduces constituents to MRAC staff members; and provides resources on access and ADA-related issues. It also contains downloadable guidelines, applications and final report forms. It lists the year's current grant awards, workshops and training activities. Constituents can also register for workshops and other activities through the site. The site is continually being modified in response to constituent needs and feedback.
2. e-newsletter – MRAC publishes a brief "facts only" newsletter on a monthly basis that contains critical information about MRAC's activities and links the reader to other relevant websites.
3. Mission to Motivation – In the FY2008/09 biennium MRAC will investigate making this popular arts participation-planning workbook available in PDF format.

### **ARTS ADVOCACY, EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP**

MRAC is committed to giving voice to the needs of small organizations and volunteer arts groups. This advocacy work will continue to happen in many ways through MRAC's participation in public forums on behalf of the arts and MRAC's education efforts with policy makers, constituents and the community at large.

#### Constituent Education about Arts Advocacy

Helping constituents better understand the power of grass-roots advocacy is vital to MRAC's work. It is particularly important to maximize MRAC's advocacy training work in the greater metro area where the majority of the state's population lives and from which the greatest number of legislators are elected. During the biennium MRAC staff will attend the board meetings and/or rehearsals of constituents to introduce them to the importance of arts advocacy on the local, state and national level and to inform them about the resources available to help them in their efforts.

#### MRAC Advocacy Activities

To achieve its arts advocacy goals, MRAC will continue to play an active role in the work of the RAC Forum, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, MSAB and other organizations working to ensure that arts funding in Minnesota remains strong.

## **STRENGTHENING MRAC'S INFRASTRUCTURE**

### Internal Operations

In early FY08 MRAC will complete its internal succession planning toolkit and procedures manuals for all staff positions.

### Strategic Planning

MRAC's strategic plan was developed for FY2006 – FY2009. The FY2008/2009 plan is included at the beginning of this document.

In FY2009 MRAC staff and board will build upon the strengths and learning from the plan, as well as issues of importance in the current arts community landscape, to complete a strategic plan to guide FY2010-FY2014.

# Attachments

- A. FY2008/2009 biennial budget (draft)
- B. Biennial planning process and timetable
- C. Program information
  - 1. Grant deadlines and panel review dates for FY2008/09.
  - 2. Training programs – representative sample descriptions
- D. MRAC program guidelines/review and eligibility criteria.
  - 1. Arts Activity Support (AAS)
  - 2. Community Arts (CA)
  - 3. Organizational Development (OD)
  - 4. Capital Grants (CAP)
  - 5. Management Training Consulting Fund (MCF)
  - 6. Management Training Fund (MTF)
  - 7. Municipal Challenge - Special Initiative
  - 8. New Immigrant Communities
    - a) Special Initiative
    - b) New Immigrant Block Grant Initiative
  - 9. Emergency Accessibility (EA)
- E. Grants administration and review materials
  - 1. Sample grant contract
  - 2. Grant-making process (includes procedures for paying and monitoring grants)
  - 3. Panel policies
  - 4. Review process
- F. MRAC by-laws, policies (includes board nominating process), procedures
- G. Board of Directors (includes board affiliations)
- H. Staff job descriptions and staff list

## Publications available on request

A New Angle – Arts Development in the Suburbs  
From Mission to Motivation—A Focused Approach to Building Arts Participation  
ADA Access Guide  
Working with American Sign Language Interpreters  
Brave New World – Nurturing the Arts in New Immigrant and Refugee Communities  
Thriving Arts: Thriving Small Communities