

# Arts Policy through City Government in Boston, MA

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## The City of Boston's Arts Budget

- The “percentage for the arts” funding in Boston, could go to Boston artists or displaced Boston artists only. In addition this opportunity could be open to all Boston residents including artists without homes, and new residents. Currently the money can be given to non-residents.

More Information about current guidelines:

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/arts-and-culture/public-art-projects#the-percent-for-art-program>

- Community Benefits through the City's PILOT program could include funding artwork and performances from city residents.
- Each City Councilor office, and the Mayor's office could rent one artwork a year for \$500, for each office. The City Department of Arts and Culture could include funding for this as a budgeted item. If this department and the Mayor chose to not support this proposal, another option would be for individual City Councilors to fund this idea independently, from their own budgets.
- In Boston many businesses offer artists display space, and the opportunity to sell their work. It would be ideal if artists were given a fee for leasing their work, even if it were a small stipend. City government buildings have a lot spaces where art could be displayed. If each show offered at least a small stipend it would show respect for an artist's work and set an example for city businesses to follow. In the Fenway there is a program called The Fenway Landlord-Artist Linkage Program that could be a reference: [http://ljgraf.com/Fenway\\_Arts/Arts\\_Linkage.pdf](http://ljgraf.com/Fenway_Arts/Arts_Linkage.pdf)
- Many galleries charge a fee when an artist applies to show in a gallery, or is applying for membership in a gallery. These fees which are a burden to many artists, often are a great help in adding income to a gallery. As galleries tend to have large fluctuations in sales, this income can often help keep a gallery running. The city budget for the arts could give co-op galleries a stipend that would be for a year's time, if the gallery agreed to not charge entry fees to artists for that year. If this was successful the scope could be enlarged to more galleries.
- When artists work with various city departments there could be a policy that artist's websites, instagram accounts and contact information be included in all press releases and on digital, video and print media, to help them promote their careers.
- Many artists get out of art school and switch from working part time to full time. This is largely so that they can get health insurance. Yet the longer that an artist can at least create their work at least 20 hours a week, the more likely they will keep creating and have a chance to make some income from that work. If artists in Boston could have access to a group health insurance plan through the City of Boston Arts and Culture department that was affordable, that would be a huge benefit to artists.

## Youth Artists

- Have certified art teachers in every Boston Public School.
- Expand the Mayor's Mural Crew. Also have an outreach to youth artists without homes, for this program.

## Artist housing

- Only allow current city residents (housed or not) and displaced city residents to have access to certified Boston live/work spaces. Currently artists living outside of Boston can apply regardless to whether they were former residents.
- Change zoning to allow for live/work space in commercial storefronts, for both rental and purchased properties. Also change zoning to allow for studio spaces to be created in residential properties to increase the amount of studio space on the city.  
More Information:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HL9FkJ7ck77n7rllbb1VQt1RdWZGabz4VPVI6j0mC4k/edit>
- Have new artist developments built by the city be artist run, and set up for perpetuity, for long term stability.
- Create new artist studios in city properties, including libraries, and community centers. Also allow churches to offer studio spaces (these ideas came from Mark Pelletier at Spontaneous Celebrations in Jamaica Plain).  
Committee on Arts, Culture & Special Events Hearing on November 13, 2019:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29\\_Z8s7ISKE&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29_Z8s7ISKE&feature=emb_title)  
Even one studio in each building could add up, if this was available in many buildings. “Tiny houses” could also be allowed in the parking lots of these buildings to provide even more studio space.
- City properties that have leases for art studios could be required to maintain the properties for this purpose, and not be used later for another purpose, including artist residency programs. An example of where this suggestion could be applied:  
<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2019/09/25/new-residency-program-for-artists-could-displace-some-tenants/YQG2BH8dSXLV5ODmWP7J6I/story.html>
- Zoning for Artist’s workspaces could have a variance that would allow for a taller building if there was less parking spaces and more green space. For this to work a freight elevator would need to be easily accessible by vehicles, so that artists could easily move large artworks, art supplies, and performance equipment in and out of the building.
- Since some artists have families or wish to have families it would be ideal to create spaces in artist buildings that families can live in, as well as offer studio spaces in residential buildings. Also subsidies for housing should intentionally include artists, and artists with families as well.