



# This is the power of culture.

An investment for our Commonwealth



*Power of culture*



*Front/back cover  
photo: KAIROS  
Dance Theater*

*This page: Raw Art  
Works, Lynn*

*“To invest in our cultural  
life is to invest in our  
shared future.”*

— ANITA WALKER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
MASS CULTURAL COUNCIL



Vibrant cities and towns. Children experiencing the delight of discovery. Our icons of liberty preserved and celebrated. Our science museums, helping us understand our world and inspiring a new generation to make it better.

**This is the power of culture.**

Mass Cultural Council works to unleash this power across the Commonwealth. As a state agency, we promote excellence, inclusion, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and sciences to foster a rich cultural life for all Massachusetts residents and contribute to the vitality of our communities and economy. We pursue this mission through a wide range of grants, initiatives, and advocacy for artists, communities, organizations, and schools.

Working through the arts, humanities, and sciences, culture is a dynamic force for enriching communities, growing the economy, increasing accessibility, and fostering individual creativity. Culture is intrinsically valuable and unique in its ability to lift the human spirit.

Realizing this vision will require resources. Funding for Mass Cultural Council comes from annual appropriations from the Commonwealth, grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, and other sources. The pages that follow illustrate the impact of our current investments, and what we could achieve with additional resources in the years to come.

A rich cultural life plays an essential role in healthy communities, good schools, and a strong economy. To invest in our cultural life is to invest in our shared future.

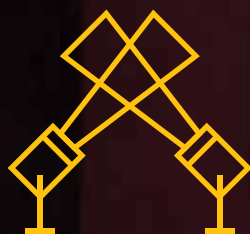
Sincerely,

Anita Walker  
Executive Director  
Mass Cultural Council



# Culture embraces everyone.

We are making culture inclusive, welcoming to everyone – as creators, participants, or audiences – and free of barriers, whether physical, educational, or societal. Why? Because, as our state grows more diverse, culture helps us build relationships across ethnic, racial, and generational lines. It makes our community stronger.



# 194

**194** festivals were funded by the Council, providing **655,177** attendees free or low-cost experiences across the Commonwealth<sup>1</sup>.

*This page: Joniece Abbott-Pratt in August Wilson's Ma Rainey's Black Bottom at the Huntington Theatre Company; photo: T. Charles Erickson.*

*Opposite: Landmarks Orchestra, Boston*







**53%** of the money granted by Mass Cultural Council goes to high-poverty counties<sup>2</sup>.

*“I want to thank you and the city for offering this opportunity to people who could not normally attend the Boston Symphony Orchestra.”*

— EBT CARD TO CULTURE PARTICIPANT



#### **Opportunity: expanding access**

Adults with disabilities are underrepresented among both performing arts and visual arts audiences. While adults with disabilities compose nearly **12%** of the U.S. adult population, they make up just under **7%** of all adults attending performing arts events or visiting art museums or galleries<sup>3</sup>.

With additional funding, **48%** of MA cultural organizations would provide free or reduced admission; improve accessibility for persons with disabilities; and add classes, exhibits, and performances for the public.





# Culture enriches our communities.

Culture is integral to quality of life: it engages citizens, connects neighbors, and gives people compelling reasons to spend time – and money – in cities and towns across Massachusetts. That's why the American Planning Association identifies culture as a primary tool for community revitalization<sup>4</sup>.

# 51 THOUSAND+

Our cultural organizations offer more than **51,572** public events each year; an average of **141** a day<sup>5</sup>.

*This page:* Central Square  
Cultural District, Cambridge

*Opposite:* Commonwealth  
Shakespeare Company,  
Boston



# 3 out of 4

**3 out of 4** residents participate in at least one cultural event each month, higher than the national average<sup>6</sup>.

*“Renewing our Hyannis HyArts Cultural District designation for the next five years presents a tremendous opportunity to strengthen the town’s existing arts and culture initiatives.”*

— MARK ELLS, TOWN MANAGER, TOWN OF BARNSTABLE

**Local Cultural Councils provide grants in all 351 Massachusetts cities and towns.**

Where we are:



**43%**  
of community need = **5,931 events supported**

Where we could be:



**90%**  
of community need = **8,000 events supported**



# Culture drives growth and opportunity.

The economic impact of culture goes way beyond state revenue and job creation – though those are significant. Culture also propels urban development, ignites innovation and creativity, and attracts the skilled workforce Massachusetts needs to compete on the global stage.

# 73,000

Our cultural nonprofits support more than **73,000** full-time-equivalent jobs<sup>7</sup>.

*This page:* by Smart Destinations, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston  
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*Opposite:* DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln





3

BILLION

of economic impact  
for Massachusetts

Each year, cultural nonprofit organizations spend **\$1.38 billion** directly, generating **\$880 million** of indirect spending by visitors, resulting in **\$2.3 billion** of economic impact for the state<sup>8</sup>.

*“I chose Boston because of the cultural life: symphony, colleges, theater, beautiful architecture, etc. These things attract the kind of intelligent people we’d like to employ.”*

— FROM “WHAT DO THE BEST ENTREPRENEURS WANT IN A CITY?” BY ENDEAVOR INSIGHT

**\$41 million** in revenue, combined with **\$56 million** of audience spending revenue, results in **\$97 million** back into state coffers<sup>9</sup>. These funds help pay for transportation, education, and other public services – a seven to one return on taxpayers’ investment in the Council.



Research shows that boosting cultural production can increase local GDP **permanently**<sup>10</sup>.



# Culture empowers a new generation.

More than arts education, culture is crucial to developing creative, productive, and independent-minded young people in Massachusetts – citizens who are ready to succeed in the global economy. Chances are, tomorrow's big entrepreneurs are earning their chops in programs like YouthReach and SerHacer.

# 92,724

**92,724** children are engaged in creative youth development and education by Mass Cultural Council grantees<sup>11</sup>.

*This page:* Central Square Cultural District, Cambridge

*Opposite:* Actors' Shakespeare Project, Somerville





# 84%

**84%** of creative youth development participants plan for post-secondary education<sup>12</sup>.

**If more funding was available, creative youth development programs could provide even greater opportunities to Massachusetts students and children.**

Regardless of economic status, students who study the arts in school have **lower dropout rates**, **higher GPAs**, and **better scores in math and language** on standardized tests<sup>13</sup>.

Our creative youth development programs currently empower **6,094** at-risk youth. With additional funding, we could support **10,000** at-risk youth<sup>14</sup>.

**How additional support could expand the impact of creative learning experiences, in and out of school:**

No. of kids served FY17

**86,630**



With more funding, we could serve

**125,000**



### **What culture can do: Xavier Harvey**

A graduate of Actors' Shakespeare Project's **Shakespeare Inside & Out**, a program for youth in the custody of the MA Department of Youth Services (DYS), Xavier now gives back to young people as an Amplify grantee. "Kids trust me because I've been through it, and I'm still working every day on my own personal growth."





# Investing in culture.

*This page:* MASS MoCA,  
North Adams

*Opposite:* Hyde Square  
Task Force, Jamaica Plain



*The numbers tell the story: culture is a powerful force for bettering our communities, growing our economy, creating opportunities, and developing a new creative generation. But there's more to culture than statistics. We believe that our cultural life is essential to our quality of life in Massachusetts. Culture elevates us, expands our perspective, and, in the words of Albert Einstein, "leads [us] toward freedom." We can't think of a better investment than that.*

Massachusetts ranks **35<sup>th</sup>** in the nation, just behind Alabama, in average grants awarded to cultural organizations, artists, and communities. Increasing investment in culture would elevate MA to **18<sup>th</sup>** nationally<sup>15</sup>.

Where we are:

**35<sup>th</sup>**  
in the nation

Where we could be:

**18<sup>th</sup>**  
in the nation

**Leveraging public and private investments:**

For every

**\$1**

Mass Cultural  
Council awards



**\$102**

is raised by  
grantees



# What you can do.

1

**Get informed.** Mass Cultural Council funds dozens of programs and initiatives that have a profound impact in the lives of citizens across the Commonwealth. This report shows only a sample: visit [massculturalcouncil.org](http://massculturalcouncil.org) to learn more.

2

**Start a conversation.** Find out what's happening in the cultural life of your community. Talk to local employers, educators, engaged residents, and visitors. Ask them what culture means to them in their day-to-day lives.

3

**Stay connected.** You play an integral role in creating and supporting a rich, accessible cultural life in Massachusetts. Without you, we stand to lose everything that culture brings to our communities, to the state and local economies, and to our children. We believe in the power of culture. Will you?

## Resources

### Culture embraces everyone

<sup>1</sup> From Mass Cultural Council.

<sup>2</sup> State Arts Agency Grantmaking and Poverty Rate for Massachusetts, provided by National Assembly of Arts Agencies. High-poverty is defined as greater than the statewide poverty rate of 11%.

<sup>3</sup> National Endowment for the Arts Research on Arts Participation Among People With Disabilities, "A Matter of Choice? Arts Participation Patterns of Disabled Americans."

### Culture enriches our communities

<sup>4</sup> The American Planning Association. "The Role of the Arts and Culture in Planning Practice."

<sup>5</sup> DataArts, Cultural Data Project (CDP). The data in the CDP is self-reported by the individual organizations. Analysis of the CDP data is based on the "most recent fiscal year" data from Massachusetts CDP. The data analyzed was provided by 490 organizations across Massachusetts.

<sup>6</sup> LaPlaca Cohen. "Culture Track 2014: Focus on Boston," Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Retrieved from <http://www.mfa.org/news/news-and-events/culture-track-focus-on-boston>

### Culture drives growth and opportunity

<sup>7</sup> Americans for the Arts. (2017). "Arts & Economic Prosperity 5: The Economic Impact of Nonprofits and Cultural Organizations and Their Audiences in the State of Massachusetts." Retrieved from [www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org)

<sup>8</sup> Americans for the Arts.

<sup>9</sup> Americans for the Arts.

<sup>10</sup> Pedroni, P., & Sheppard, S. "Culture Shocks and Consequences: the causal link between the arts and economic growth," p 23.

### Culture empowers a new generation

<sup>11</sup> From Mass Cultural Council as reported by Big Yellow School Bus, STARS Residency, Creative Minds Out of School, Poetry Out Loud, YouthReach, and SerHacer grantees.

<sup>12</sup> From Mass Cultural Council as reported by YouthReach and SerHacer grantees.

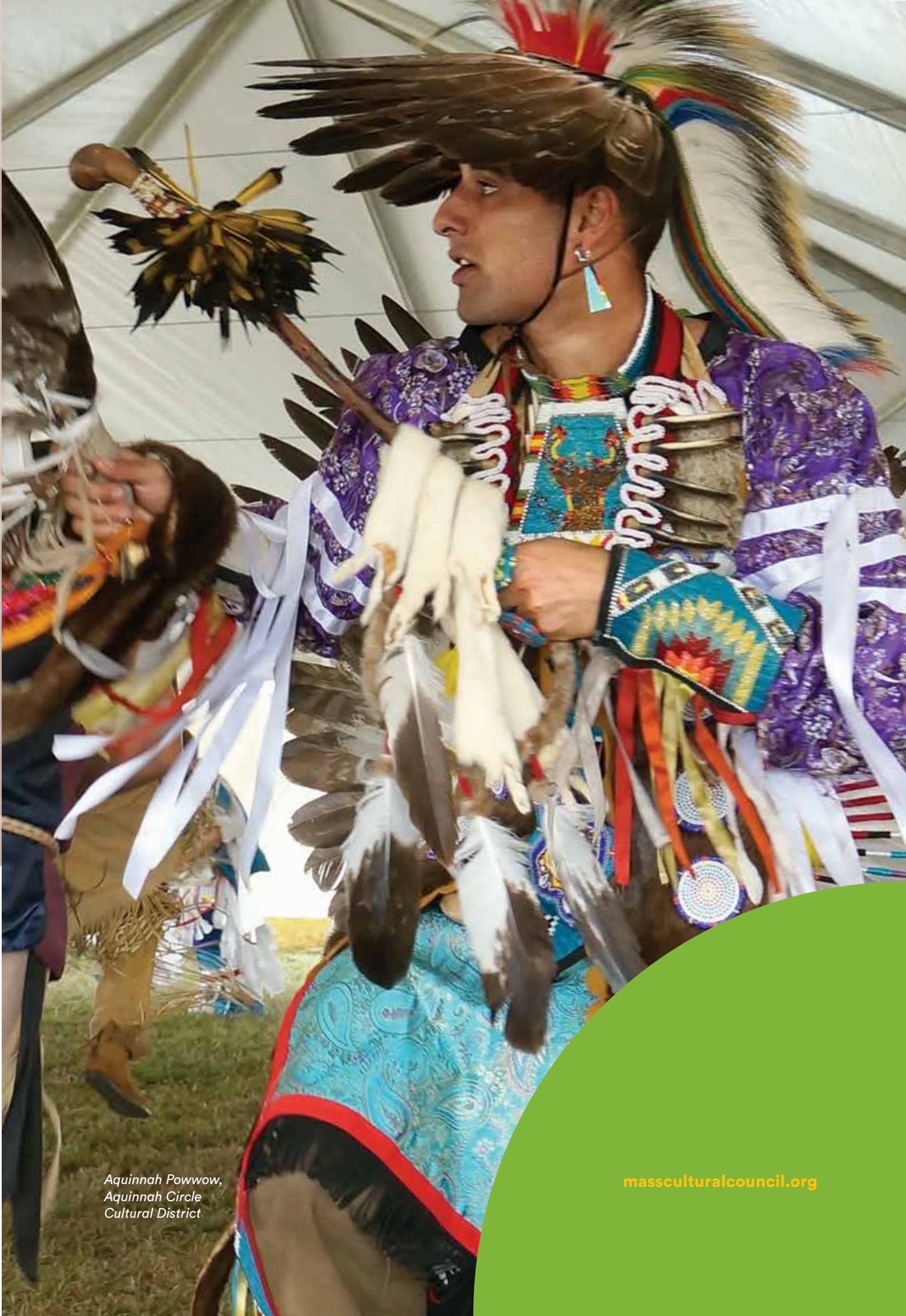
<sup>13</sup> Brown, Kimberley. (October 2017). "The Arts and Dropout Prevention: The Power of Art to Engage, A National Dropout Prevention Center/Network White Paper."

<sup>14</sup> From Mass Cultural Council.

### Investing in culture

<sup>15</sup> National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. "State Arts Agency Final Descriptive Reports FY15."

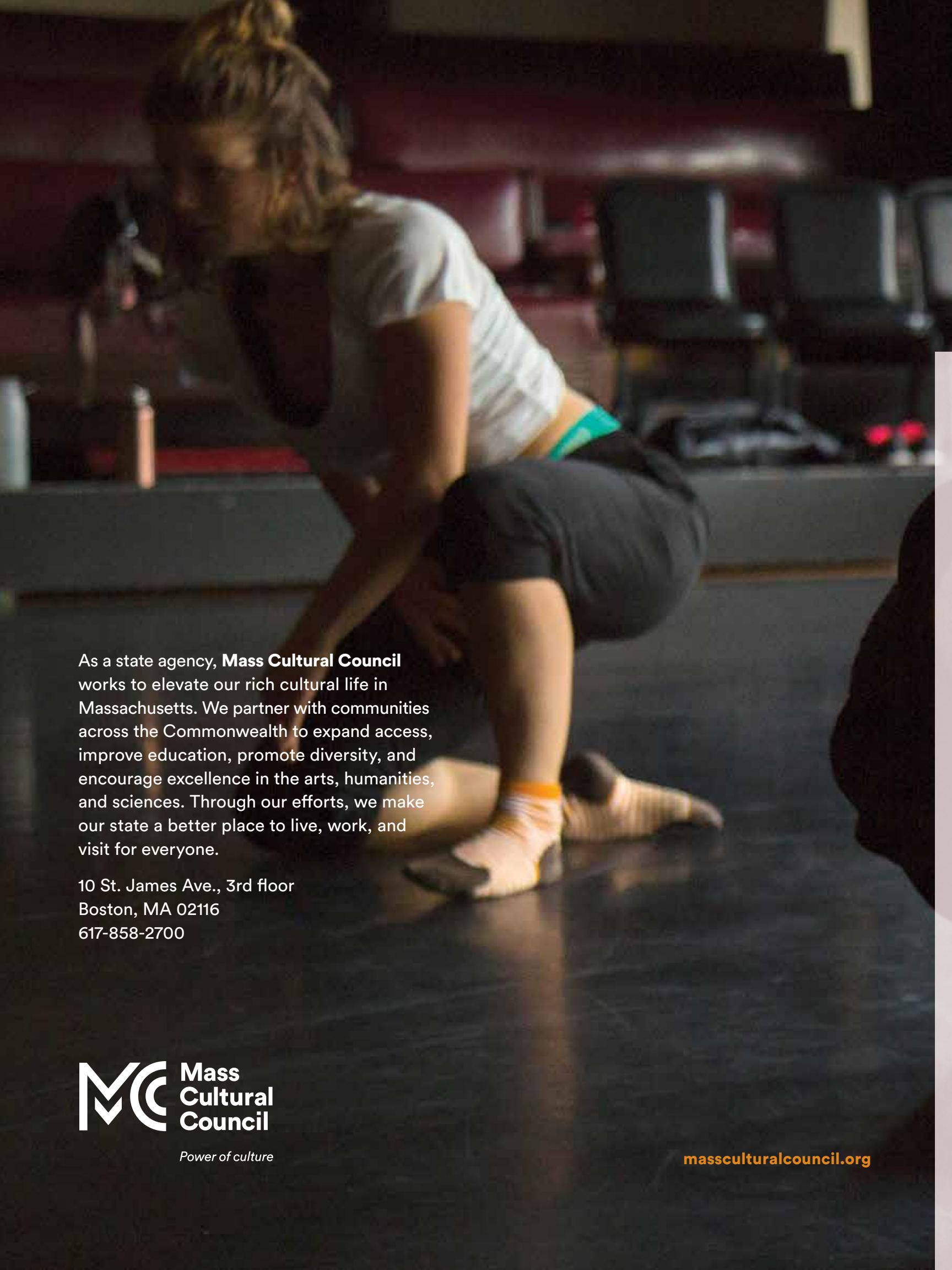




Aquinnah Powwow,  
Aquinnah Circle  
Cultural District

[massculturalcouncil.org](http://massculturalcouncil.org)





As a state agency, **Mass Cultural Council** works to elevate our rich cultural life in Massachusetts. We partner with communities across the Commonwealth to expand access, improve education, promote diversity, and encourage excellence in the arts, humanities, and sciences. Through our efforts, we make our state a better place to live, work, and visit for everyone.

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