

IOWA ARTS COUNCIL CREATIVE PLACES PATHWAY

IOWA
Economic Development

The Creative Places Pathway is a roadmap that any Iowa community, of any size, can follow to improve community and economic development outcomes by leveraging the arts, culture, and creativity.

Communities following the Pathway form a shared vision and set of prioritized projects that build upon their local assets in the arts, culture, and heritage and authentic sense of place.

Benefits of Following the Pathway

As partners with the **Iowa Arts Council (IAC)**, communities following the Pathway may:

- Access technical assistance and training
- Attend convenings that provide opportunities for peer learning and mentorship, sharing best practices, and exchanging ideas
- Apply for competitive funding opportunities tailored to creative places
- Receive recognition for impactful projects and successes

Why Creative Community Development Matters

The arts and creative sector are increasingly recognized as a core partner in economic development initiatives and a key to enhancing community livability, well-being and connectedness.

Creating and activating places and spaces enhance social opportunities and cultural vibrancy, which are crucial ingredients for recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce and business development and innovation.



Artist Isaac Campbell and the Grinnell Area Arts Council installed wheat paste murals celebrating the history of the community.



Rooftop arts installation by Dana Harrison in Jefferson.



Musicians perform in Historic Valley Junction in West Des Moines.

How to Use the Pathway

The Creative Places Pathway is a process to help you organize your efforts, accessing coaching and support, and identify the right resources along your path in creative community and economic development.

The Pathway helps communities of all sizes identify their creative and cultural assets - the first step to creative community development. Through the Pathway and connected resources, the IAC emphasizes:

- Artist Centered Approaches
- Cross-Sector and Regional Partnerships
- Place and Asset-Based Strategies

Step 1: Tell Us About Your Creative Place

Tell us a little about your community and its vision, plans, and partners using the **Art Form (Part 1)**.

Step 2: Let's Connect

Schedule an introductory meeting with IAC Staff,

- This virtual kick-off meeting is an opportunity to discuss local goals, partners, and opportunities.
- IAC staff may take part in an in-person community visit or stakeholder meeting, if desired and beneficial to the local team.

Step 3: Define Your Creative Assets and Share Prioritized Projects

Submit the **Art Form (Part 2)**.

Step 4: Resource Matching

Based on the introductory meeting and Art Form, IAC staff will help Pathway communities to navigate and identify the most appropriate resource(s) in each area including:

- Community Visioning
- Project Funding Opportunities
- Capacity Building Programs
- Federal Place-Based Funding
- State Infrastructure Funding Opportunities
- Coaching

Step 5: Learn and Engage

The Iowa Arts Council offers networks and learning opportunities that highlight communities and projects that leverage the arts, culture and creativity in community and economic development.

- Iowa Creative Places Network
- Iowa Creative Places Exchange
- Webinar Series

Questions?

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