



- TOOLKIT TEMPLATES -

Using These Templates

These are just templates. We **HIGHLY** recommend that you edit these to fit your community, your issue(s), and with facts and figures that you think would be most appealing to the audience you're addressing. These are very basic templates and need personal stories and perspective to really be effective!

Let us know of any actions you take and give us feedback on these templates! This is a team effort!

EMAIL + LETTER | ELECTED OFFICIALS

Subject: Constituent - [Issue Name]

Dear Representative / Senator / Mayor / Council Member / School Board Member _____:

February 5 - 9 is Arts Advocacy Week in South Carolina. I am emailing you today to express my continued support for the arts in our community and to encourage you and your colleagues to commit to support the arts through your policies, funding proposals, and platforms for the benefit of our community.

As your constituent, I want you to know that the arts are vital our own community. [Tell a personal impact story about the arts.]

Beyond our own community's boundaries, the arts have a huge impact on our state. In fact, recent economic impact data indicates that the arts have a \$9.7 billion economic impact statewide and nationally represent 4.2% of our entire nation's GDP. They also support almost 115,000 jobs in South Carolina. The arts are important to our state and local economy.

The impact that the arts have on our children's education is extremely important. In fact, students who have exposure to the arts in the classroom are more likely to graduate on time, perform at a higher level academically, and are able to problem solve and create innovative solutions needed in our 21st century workforce.

I hope that you and your colleagues will show your support for our community and the arts that help make it grow and thrive by [request specific action if applicable]. I look forward to your response and monitoring your support of the arts.

Thank you for your time and for your service to our community. If you have any questions about this issue or the arts in general, please reach out to me and I will do my best to address them.

Sincerely,

[Your Name, Phone #, Email]

CURTAIN SPEECH

Thank you all for coming to [insert performance or venue name]!

Before we get started, we here at [organization / company name] want to take a moment and recognize that this week, February 5 - 9, is South Carolina Arts Advocacy Week across our state. We stand in solidarity with the entire creative community this week to encourage our public officials, community leaders, and even you all here tonight, to ensure the arts are seen as a viable tool for our society and to back that stance with policy, funding, and support.

This week, arts organizations, artists, creative companies, educators, and community leaders are coming together to show a unified support for the arts and the impact they have on our community.

The arts are vital to our community and our state. Recent economic data released by the SC Arts Commission shows that the arts have a \$9.7 billion economic impact in our state, supporting almost 115,000 jobs across the state. Furthermore, arts education initiatives reach hundreds of thousands of students every day in our community's schools.

Right here at home, [insert commentary or story about local impact of the arts].

We're happy to be a part of this week's activities and want to make sure that you join us. As you leave here today, share your thoughts on social media about the arts using the hashtag #CreativeSC. Email or call your elected officials and tell them how much the arts mean to our community. You can also visit the South Carolina Arts Alliance website, scartsalliance.net, and learn about additional ways you can raise your voice for the arts this week, and every week.

Art is right here in [insert community name], let's push to make it stronger.

PUBLIC COMMENT | COMMUNITY MEETINGS + EDUCATION MEETINGS

Good **morning / afternoon / evening**. Today, I want to take a moment and recognize that this week, February 5 - 9, is South Carolina Arts Advocacy Week across our state. Myself and thousands of other arts advocates stand in solidarity with the entire creative community this week to encourage our public officials, community leaders, and our neighbors, to ensure the arts are seen as a viable tool for our society and to back that stance with policy, funding, and support.

This week, arts organizations, artists, creative companies, educators, and community leaders are coming together to show a unified support for the arts and the impact they have on our community.

The arts are vital to our community and our state. Recent economic data released by the SC Arts Commission shows that the arts have a \$9.7 billion economic impact in our state, supporting almost 115,000 jobs across the state. Furthermore, arts education initiatives reach hundreds of thousands of students every day in our community's schools.

Right here at home, [\[insert commentary or story about local impact of the arts or arts education\]](#).

Our community is made more beautiful, stronger economically, and a more vibrant place to live because of the arts. I encourage each of you tonight to find your own way through your service on this [Council / Committee / Board](#) to provide support for the arts in our own backyard.

Art is right here in [\[insert community or school name\]](#), let's push to make it stronger.

RESOLUTION | CITIES / COUNTIES / BOARDS

Whereas the arts are a vital component of quality of life in every community;

Whereas local economies are strengthened by the production and presentation of artwork across all disciplines;

Whereas students participating in the arts are shown to succeed in many measures during their educational journey;

Whereas the business community places value on creativity to create innovative solutions to today's most challenging problems; and

Whereas artists help all community members see the world through new perspectives and broaden our understanding of the world; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that [\[insert city, county, or organization name here\]](#):

1. Recognizes and appreciates the value that the arts have in our community, schools, and local economy;
2. Will continue to support the arts to best of its ability; and
3. Encourages all members of the community to patron, support, and participate in the arts.

Signed on this day, [\[insert date\]](#), by Members of [\[insert city / county / organization board or council name here\]](#).

FORUM CHECKLIST | CANDIDATES, CURRENT OFFICE HOLDERS, COMMUNITY LEADERS

- **Date / Time / Location of Forum** | Ideally held during Arts Advocacy Week (Feb 5-9, 2018), but at least announced during the week. But don't let that stop you from using this checklist to host one later on in the year!
- **Rental Agreement Signed + Permits** | Get approval from the venue, plus check with City Hall on any specific permits needed if you're using a public space. Follow any guidelines set forth by the venue manager. You may want to think about having security present, especially if your issue is a divisive one.
- **Theme Set** | Be specific with your theme. Try topics such as "Strengthening Our Schools with the Arts", or "Public Art in Our Town". Don't stick to generic "arts" or "arts education" as your focus. Make this forum about your community specifically.
- **Pick Moderator, Develop Questions** | Before you put the word out, find yourself a local moderator. Someone who is known in the community, but can also provide an objective view on your topic. You don't want someone who will make your participants on stage turn down your invitation because of an adverse relationship. Develop a few questions to get everyone on the same page, and so you have some samples to send to those you invite to participate so they can be better informed.
- **Invite Participants** | If you're doing this as a "Candidate's Forum" before an election - be sure to invite every candidate who has filed, do not leave anyone out. If it's for current elected officials, you should invite all of them as well. "Community Forums", which are more about current issues with current leaders, do not have to only be elected officials. You can then invite maybe just a mayor or committee chairperson, and then a leader in the subject area of your theme. Don't forget to have varied opinions! Sometimes someone who has a different view point makes for the best conversation!
- **Announce to the Public** | Start spreading the news! You know the drill: print and TV media, social media, posters, websites, etc. You may want to have pre-registration so that you know how many people to expect. We highly recommend making it a free event for the public. If you're dealing with Congressional members or Governors, their staff and security may request a list of registrants in advance, so be sure to check with them. Encourage your participants to tell their constituents about it too!
- **Day-Of Notes** | When it's show time, make sure the venue is clean (including the bathrooms!) and that all signage is placed properly. Give your participants enough time to arrive early and get situated. Have water and maybe a snack or two for them. Keep everyone informed on any changes in the timeline. Don't allow the public to bring in signs or other distractions and be sure to tell them that no disturbances (yelling, throwing items, or "boo—ing") is allowed. Keep it civil. Have a plan in case something does happen and let your volunteers know the protocol. Try your best to keep everything on time. Work with your moderator on ensuring participants don't take too much time and that you end the forum on time.
- **Record It!** | Try to live stream your event, or record it for viewing or listening later. Take photos!
- **Share the Results!** | Afterwards, let the world know how successful your event was and what each person said. Send out a newsletter with a recap, have the newspaper do an article, etc. Don't let the forum be the end of the discussion!

RALLY CHECKLIST | PUBLIC SPACES

- **Date / Time / Location of Forum** | Ideally held during Arts Advocacy Week (Feb 5-9, 2018), but at least announced during the week. But don't let that stop you from using this checklist to host one later on in the year!
- **Rental Agreement Signed + Permits** | Get approval from the venue, plus check with City Hall on any specific permits needed if you're using a public space. Follow any guidelines set forth by the venue manager. You may want to think about having security present, especially if your issue is a divisive one - it may also be required. You may be required to pay a permit fee.
- **Set the Program** | It's helpful to have some structure to your rally. Pick a speaker / performer or two. Make sure the event flows well - you don't want someone wondering when it starts, what's next, or when it ends.
- **Set Some Rules** | The arts are nonpartisan - so be sure your rally's theme and contents do not portray a negative image to any particular official, candidate, or political party. Positive messages are best. Make sure your participants know the rules ahead of time - cut off time, sign limits, behavior accepted, parking, etc.
- **Announce to the Public** | Start spreading the news! You know the drill: print and TV media, social media, posters, websites, etc. You may want to have pre-registration so that you know how many people to expect. Be sure that any homes or businesses who may be impacted by traffic are made aware of the schedule and address any of their concerns.
- **Day-Of Notes** | Be sure to take note of the cleanliness of the location of your rally before you start - make sure you leave it better than you found it. Keep tabs on the time and also on noise levels, especially if using a PA system. Check in with the Police Department before, during, and after to make sure everything is in check. Have clear signs or directions laid out for people to enter/exit and park (if needed).
- **Record It!** | Try to live stream your event, or record it for viewing or listening later. Take photos!
- **Share the Results!** | Afterwards, let the world know how successful your event was and what each person said. Send out a newsletter with a recap, have the newspaper do an article, etc. Don't let the rally be the end of the discussion!