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South Arts receives grant to build, test, and launch emergency preparedness tool for arts organizations

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awards South Arts \$300,000 for ArtsReady, a new online emergency preparedness service.

Atlanta, Georgia – April 7, 2011—Preparing for the unexpected is never easy, but it is essential. Unfortunately, most arts professionals do not have training or skills in readiness or business continuity planning to move forward after an emergency has occurred. This will all change with the emergence of ArtsReady.

ArtsReady is a new web-based service that will help arts organizations be more resilient following a minor disruption to business or a major crisis. "Whether it's a hurricane, flood, pandemic or power outage ArtsReady will enable arts groups to design a readiness plan that is unique to their organization," said Malcolm White, executive director, Mississippi Arts Commission. ArtsReady, the first tool to serve arts organizations of all disciplines, will also include online information, case studies and resources for responding and recovering from crises, to aid in addressing any knowledge gaps. The public launch of ArtsReady is planned for September 1, 2011.

The Andrew W. Mellon grant awarded to South Arts plays a huge part in allowing the ArtsReady project to progress. By receiving the grant South Arts is able to build, test, and launch this one-of-a-kind online service. "South Arts is excited about the \$300,000 awarded to us by the Mellon Foundation. We appreciate Mellon's ability to see the importance of emergency preparedness when it comes to the arts community as well as their confidence in ArtsReady's role in this arena," said Gerri Combs, executive director, South Arts.

South Arts is working with Fractured Atlas, a national technology-centric non-profit arts service organization, on the ArtsReady project. ArtsReady will leverage a robust set of existing software components which Fractured Atlas has already developed specifically for cultural businesses. "Fractured Atlas is thrilled and honored to be working with South Arts on ArtsReady. This project is a great example of some ways in which technology can empower the arts community with respect to 'real world' challenges," said Adam Huttler, executive director, Fractured Atlas.

Moving forward, South Arts hopes tools like ArtsReady will not only be useful, but will also become a standard within the arts community. "We envision that within five years, just as our sector has recognized the importance of strategic planning, cultural diversity, and accessibility, organizations will

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measure their overall health in part by their readiness," said Gerri Combs, executive director, South Arts.

About South Arts

South Arts, a non-profit regional art organizations founded in 1975, creates partnerships and collaborations; presents, promotes and produces Southern art and cultural programming; and advocates for the arts and arts education. Working in partnership with nine state art agencies- Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee- South Arts builds on the South's unique heritage, and enhances the public value of the arts in our communities by promoting and supporting the arts in the South, enhancing the artistic excellence professionalism of Southern arts organizations and artists, and serving the diverse population of the South. For more information, visit www.southarts.org.

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