



National Teaching Artist Listening Tour

What?

The [Teaching Artists Guild](#), the [National Guild for Community Arts Education](#) and other teaching artist organizations need your support to host a listening tour in every locality or community in the nation. A listening tour is a facilitated open conversation to gather information, insight, values, context and new ideas from teaching artists on the ground doing the work.

Why?

This is a moment to reset and reimagine. The goal of the tour is to center teaching artists and further the field of teaching artistry. By bringing teaching artists of local communities to the table, the teaching artist organizations can understand the nuances of teaching artists' values, how they define their assets and what they identify as their challenges and needs. Learning all this allows the collective of teaching artist associations to deepen their support of and advocacy for the field. Teaching artists will also directly benefit through the conversation as they affirm what they do, broaden and deepen their community connections with local colleagues, and define their individual and collective next steps.

Who?

Sessions are for persons who identify as teaching artists. Teaching artists may be independent contractors, part-time employees, and even may hold a title in an administrative position. Here is the [TA manifesto](#), created by and for teaching artists. They may work with multiple arts organizations and live on one or more teaching artist roster. Participants should attend the session as an individual and be prepared to share their personal experience about their practice and career, letting go of their specific roles within organizations. It is suggested that sessions be held for no less than 3 teaching artists. Depending on the size of your region, multiple sessions may be needed to keep sessions small enough to welcome all perspectives. The session will also include a facilitator and note-taker/technician if organized virtually.

How?

Use the links to get further information and tools to promote, organize, implement and increase the benefits to teaching artists.



Where?

A private home, studio, a room at a public library, a garden or park, or a friendly arts venue, and of course, in these times, virtually.

When?

Do once, and repeat often.

TASKLIST

6 Weeks Ahead

- Plan additional benefits with the local or national teaching artist organizations.
 - **Learn:** This is an opportunity for teaching artists to learn about and tap into their local, statewide, regional, national and international community.
 - **Network:** Set some time aside for TAs to share projects and network. A period where everyone can have a voice.
 - **Professional Development:** Your TA community may enjoy a 15-45 minute pre-session arts experience. One or more TAs could lead an experience to share strategies/techniques they use in their work, followed by a group reflection. The group could note what worked and how it may be applicable to other art forms and settings. Or focus on a specific issue relevant to TAs, such as marketing, booking strategies, classroom management, multiple intelligences, work in healthcare, veteran centers and other community center settings.
 - **Hospitality:** Food and beverages are good, but not a deal-breaker. It depends on the venue, time, day of the week and artist's schedules. Potlucks are a common way to make good neighbors.
- Identify a facilitator and notetaker. Reach out to director@teachingartistsguild.org for suggestions.
- **Promote:** Invite TAs you know; ask them to spread the word. Let your arts agencies and organizations know about the event. Work with the local and national teaching artist organizations to publicize your event! Suggested promotion language: The Teaching Artist Guild, the National Guild for Community Arts Education and other teaching artist associations want to listen to teaching artists now and enter into an open line of communication moving into the future. They want to hear from teaching artists who may be emerging to those with a veteran career so that they can better understand the unique needs and challenges of the TA community on the grassroots level across the nation. This tour will equip these organizations in their support of and advocacy for teaching artists.



1 Week Ahead

- Review facilitation alignment (below)
 - Determine music as opener
 - Create your land acknowledgement
- Prepare to share this closing survey at the session and/or via email

In the Week After the Session

- Collect survey results.
- Share session and survey results with Teaching Artist associations (local, national)
- Schedule the next listening session in 6 months.

TOUR RESOURCES

[Facilitation Alignment](#)

[Teaching Artists Asset Map](#) - ask participants to add themselves to the map to visualize our field and get work!

[Listening Tour Closing Survey](#)

Questions

- What do you value (about teaching artistry)?
- What are the existing local assets that enable a TA to thrive? How are you managing during the pandemic? To what communities are you accountable to? What communities do you look to for validation of your work?
- What are your biggest challenges?
- What possibilities are emerging?