

Gulf States Presenters Network



As the arts field continues to be affected by diminishing public and private funding for the arts, our regional Gulf community is working to grow our arts economy in new, innovative ways. Specifically, we are working to bolster the field of presenting, since it enhances (or creates) new, earned income streams for myriad artists and arts organizations.

In 2013, we formed the Gulf States Presenters Network (GSPN) to offer solutions to two main audiences:

- 1) Emerging artists on the brink of being tour-ready and
- 2) Presenters sidelined by remote locations and lean budgets.

GSPN is unique to any presenter's network in the country because its core consists of a grant program presented mutually by the [Louisiana Division of the Arts](#), the [Mississippi Arts Commission](#) and the [Alabama Arts Council](#). All three state arts councils have offered a grant pool of \$12,000 for their presenters to present artists in the 2016 season from the other two states. Additionally, we are working to create a peer-to-peer network across the three states. Each state is now individually working to find all presenters by incentivizing them to come out of hiding through this grant opportunity. Once we find them, they become part of their state's presenter's network as well as GSPN. By May 2015, GSPN membership is anticipated to be at over 100 members representing both the rural and urban communities of the three-state consortia.

At present, we are working to build critically needed profiles of data about each presenting organization (e.g., size of venue, scope of programming, target audiences, location and budget). GSPN has enjoyed increasing national attention as a new model for how states can work together to enhance our mutual arts communities. We had our GSPN meeting at the Lake Terrace Convention Center in Hattiesburg, Miss., on January 21 during at an annual conference entitled Backstage Pass. After a full day of meetings and workshops, the Mississippi Arts Commission produced an amazing showcase of two artists from each state of GSPN.



To learn more about this grant opportunity ([click here](#)), please contact Paula White at pwhite@crt.la.gov. And visit our website [here](#) to learn more about all the programs of the Louisiana Division of the Arts.