

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE: *Arts Advocacy in San Francisco* | *Fighting Islamophobia One Piece at a Time*  
*A Different Path Toward Accessibility* | *How & When New Education Policy Affects You* | *The Arts & Politics*



# arts LINK



Americans for the Arts

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THE SOURCE FOR ARTS PROFESSIONALS IN THE KNOW



Participants during a NAMP Workshop, Building, Diversifying, and Sustaining New Audiences by Adam Thurman, hosted by RAC in St. Louis.

LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE

# CHANGE AGENTS

## Building, Diversifying, and Sustaining New Audiences

IN SAINT LOUIS, MO, the *Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis (RAC)*\* develops and hosts a myriad of workshops and development opportunities for those working in the arts. Most recently, these development opportunities focus on social change and equipping participants

to lead and manage that change through the arts. So why did RAC just re-boot its Major Marketing Initiative (MMI) which provides a variety of marketing workshops to more than 200 nonprofit arts and culture organizations throughout the St. Louis region? Audience building—and audience diversifying—is an enormous change that the arts field needs to address immediately.

RAC kicked off its MMI workshop series by partnering with our National Arts Marketing Project (NAMP) Regional Marketing Workshop, featuring Adam Thurman, director of marketing at Court Theatre in Chicago. “A week doesn’t go by when I don’t think about the lessons I learned during that workshop,” says David Nischwitz, vice president of marketing at the Saint Louis Symphony.

The workshop, titled Building, Diversifying, and Sustaining New Audiences, was more than just an audience development workshop. RAC’s Director of Marketing and External Affairs Sherry Sissac says, “When we decided to reintroduce our MMI program, we were looking for a cost effective way to present a really dynamic program that would set the stage for future programming. NAMP was the solution. Adam provided practical and authentic marketing approaches that put people at the center of mission and margin. The reaction from our workshop participants was phenomenal. Organizations were challenged to think in new ways about how to engage audiences that will make their work more relevant and sustainable.” More than 100 arts marketing administrators listened, laughed, and participated in a variety of thought provoking exercises, as Thurman presented ideas that addressed emerging audiences and the importance of staying true to one’s brand.

“There are few things more exciting than being in a room full of people who have a desire to learn, grow, and change. The artistic community in St. Louis brought all of those characteristics, and more, into the workshop. It was a privilege to spend time with them and the stellar staff of the Regional Arts Commission. I’m honored that they found my workshop to be so valuable,” said Thurman.

Visit [www.racstl.org](http://www.racstl.org) for more information. For more information about bringing a NAMP Regional Workshop like this to your community, visit [ArtsMarketing.org/training-workshops](http://ArtsMarketing.org/training-workshops).