



HOUARTS IN ACTION



Public Testimony 101

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Introductions

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Public Funding

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*Follow Along
or Get Involved*
HouArts.org

HouArts in Action is a unified approach to champion arts and culture across the region.

We are building a coalition of artists, organizations, business leaders, and community ambassadors to amplify the collective voice of the creative sector and put arts on the agenda.

What is HouArts in Action Championing?



PUBLIC FUNDING

Protect and Grow Public Funding for Arts & Culture



VIBRANT SPACES

Create and Preserve Vibrant Cultural Spaces



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Build Pathways to Prosperity for Artists & Creatives



EFFECTIVE STORYTELLING

Communicate the Richness of Houston's Culture

What is Public Testimony?

- Structured opportunity to speak directly to decision-makers
- Your personal story; not a debate.
- Putting lived experience into public record.

Types of Public Testimony

- Informing or Educating
- Responding or combatting negative perceptions
- Highlighting success, giving thanks or praise

Where does this take place?

- Council or committee meetings
- Boards and Commission meetings



What it looks like

- Meeting dictates length. Sometimes changes if there are a lot of people.
- Can be 1-3 minutes, and timed.
- If invited, may be longer, and may be allowed to submit presentation.
- You may get follow-up questions from board/council/leadership.
- Notify elected officials you are attending & the nature of your testimony.

Crafting Your Message

- Know who's in the room.
- Introduce yourself and share thanks.
- Frontload your message.
- Data is good. Data alongside a personal story or connection is better.
- Consider tone and adjust tone depending on message.
- Conclude with your "ask."

Public Testimony Breakouts

- Each group will be assigned a messaging focus
- Establish who you're speaking to, context of meeting.
- Take turns practicing a 1 minute public testimony.
- Group gives feedback. (Here's what I heard...)

Upcoming Opportunities

- **City Council & Arts Committee Meetings - 2nd Wednesday of each month www.houstontx.gov**
- **TIRZ meetings (Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones) - www.houstontx.gov/ecodev/tirz.html**
- **HoustonFirst Corporation - www.houstonfirst.com**
- **County Commissioners Meetings - Tuesdays - <https://agenda.harriscountytexas.gov/>**

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