



Formerly VSA Vermont

Frequently Asked Questions: The Name Change

Adapted from our friends at ArtMix (formerly VSA Indiana)

Why are you changing your name?

VSA Vermont has decided to change its name because:

- There is long-standing confusion over what our name is (Very Special Arts, VSA arts, VSA), and what VSA stands for (Very Special Arts, Vermont Start With The Arts, Vermont State Arts). **By changing our name we can more clearly communicate who we are, who we serve, and what we do.**
- The name "VSA Vermont" requires detailed explanation and history. In 2010, the international affiliate transitioned from Very Special Arts to simply VSA, asking affiliates to go by the acronym only.
- **Redefining and clarifying our identity is part of our strategic plan and vision for the organization.**
- A recent change to the national VSA Network allows us to have flexibility in our name and choose something that **truly reflects the uniqueness and vibrancy of our work in Vermont.**
- Attention to marketing and public awareness are crucial to our increased stability and fulfillment of our mission.

How did you choose Inclusive Arts Vermont?

The staff and board began a brainstorming process for a new name in early 2018. In January 2019 we launched a survey to the public to receive feedback on our brand, including feedback on a potential new name. From this, in February 2019, the staff and board of directors and voted to make the organization's new name Inclusive Arts Vermont, effective May 31, 2019.

The staff and board of directors felt that this name was truly reflective of the mission and work of the organization. They also saw significant value in having a name that did not need detailed explanation or history for context.

Where did the logo design come from?

The logo design is intended to reflect creativity, movement, and inclusion. Multiple colors were used to represent diversity in art forms and abilities, while the shapes have been described by many as brushstrokes, human figures, a dance, or a circle. However the viewer interprets it, the logo is meant to represent what our organization is all about: **the inclusion of all people in their communities through creativity.** The logo was created by LondonMiddlebury, a Vermont-based branding firm.

Are you changing your mission or programs?

No, and yes. For more than 30 years our focus has been on creating opportunities for expression, joy, and inclusion through creativity – that's not changing. Our programs continually evolve to meet the needs of Vermonters as they arise, but the focus of the work and our mission remains the same. Currently we are working to offer more training and exhibition programs, while our work in arts education across the state remains as strong as ever.

Are you still affiliated with the Kennedy Center?

Yes. Since 1986, VSA Vermont has been a member of the VSA Affiliate Network, a program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. While the affiliate network structure no longer exists, we continue to work as a contractor with the Kennedy Center's VSA Office to engage children with disabilities in arts education programs throughout the state.