

Americans for the Arts Unveils Findings from Fifth National Economic Impact Study of Nonprofit Arts and Cultural Organizations and Their Audiences

Study Demonstrates That Nonprofit Arts Are An Economic, Employment Powerhouse

Washington, DC, June 17, 2017—A new national study by Americans for the Arts finds that the nation’s nonprofit arts and culture industry generated \$166.3 billion in economic activity in 2015—\$63.8 billion in spending by arts and cultural organizations and an additional \$102.5 billion in event-related spending by their audiences. This activity supported 4.6 million jobs and generated \$27.5 billion in government revenue.

Arts & Economic Prosperity[®] 5 (AEP5) is the largest study of its kind ever conducted and was released today at Americans for the Arts’ Annual Convention in San Francisco. AEP5 documents the economic contributions of the nonprofit arts industry nationally as well as in 341 study regions, representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Data was gathered from 14,439 arts and cultural organizations and from 212,691 members of their audiences. Project economists customized input-output models for each study region to ensure reliable and actionable localized results.

“By every measure, the results of *Arts & Economic Prosperity 5* prove that the arts are an industry—a generator of government revenue, a cornerstone of tourism, and an employment powerhouse both locally and across the nation,” said **Robert L. Lynch**, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “Leaders who care about community and economic vitality, growing tourism, attracting an innovative workforce, and community engagement can feel good about choosing to invest in the arts.”

Key AEP5 Findings:

- Nationally, the nonprofit arts industry generated \$166.3 billion of economic activity in 2015—\$63.8 billion in spending by arts and cultural organizations and an additional \$102.5 billion in event-related expenditures by their audiences.
- This industry supported 4.6 million jobs and generated \$27.5 billion in revenue to local, state, and federal governments—a yield well beyond their collective \$5 billion in arts allocations.
- Money spent by nonprofit arts and cultural organizations supported a larger share of the U.S. workforce—0.83 percent—than the legal or public safety sectors.
- Based on the 212,691 audience surveys conducted, the typical arts attendee spent \$31.47 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission.
- The economic impact of the arts is more than the monies spent in communities. Cultural tourists spend money, as well. Thirty-four percent of attendees traveled from outside of the county in which the event took place. Their event-related spending was more than twice that of their local counterparts (\$47.57 vs. \$23.44).
- A vibrant arts community not only keeps residents and their discretionary spending closer to home, it also attracts visitors who spend money and help local businesses thrive. Sixty-nine percent of nonlocal attendees indicated that the primary purpose of their visit was “specifically to attend this arts or cultural event.”
- Among local attendees, 41 percent said they would have traveled to a different community to attend a similar cultural event, if the arts event they wanted to attend was not taking place.

“With current threats against nonprofit organizations, such as limiting the federal charitable tax deduction, the \$27.5 billion in revenue back to the government generated by arts industry

expenditures shows that municipal, state and federal arts support is not a one-way street. Rather, there is a benefit of substantial revenue back to government that accompanies the public good that these organizations and their audiences provide to their community,” said Lynch.

The full report, a map of the 341 study regions and a two-page economic impact summary for each, a sample PowerPoint presentation, and a media toolkit for advocates can be found at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/EconomicImpact.

Thirteen national organizations partnered with Americans for the Arts on AEP5, including The United States Conference of Mayors, National Lieutenant Governors Association, Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy, National Association of Counties, National League of Cities, Destinations International, National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations, International City/County Management Association, Independent Sector, Grantmakers in the Arts, National Conference of State Legislatures, Council on Foundations, and The Conference Board.

Americans for the Arts’ work on AEP5 has been supported by The Ruth Lilly Fund of Americans for the Arts, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and Barr Foundation. In addition, Americans for the Arts’ local and statewide study partners contributed both time and a cost-sharing fee to support to the study. Financial information from organizations was collected in partnership with DataArts™, using an online survey interface.

***Americans for the Arts** is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 55 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.*

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