

NATIONAL CULTURAL DISTRICTS EXCHANGE



Cultural District Events

Festivals, events, and community activities are an important component in creating a successful cultural district. Festivals and events create opportunities for the community and the visitors to engage with all the cultural district has to offer and opportunities for local businesses and artists/arts organizations to collaborate on marketing and promotions.

Types of Cultural District Events

- Festivals
- Art Walks
- Outdoor performances
- Concerts
- Street performers
- Film festivals and outdoor films

FESTIVALS

Festivals in cultural districts are generally multidisciplinary and showcase both the visual and performing arts. They can be small and highlight artists and arts organizations from the cultural district or grand productions that often are designed to attract the cultural tourist. Festivals are funded by fees from artists, ticket fees, local government grants, in-kind assistance, and foundation and corporate sponsorships.

Examples of festivals in cultural districts across the country:

- Dollar Bank Three Rivers Arts Festival, Pittsburgh, PA
<http://www.3riversartsfest.org/about-three-rivers-arts-festival/an-introduction>
- Hyattsville Arts Festival, Hyattsville, MD
http://hyattsvilleartsfestival.com/?page_id=2161
- SubZERO Festival, San Jose, CA
<http://www.subzerofestival.com>

ART WALKS

Art walks usually take place once a month on a recurring day of the week. These art walks are designed to highlight cultural district galleries (nonprofit and for-profit) that showcase artwork created both locally, nationally, and internationally. There is often food and live musical performances during the art walks.

Examples of art walks in cultural districts across the country:

- Bethesda Art Walk, Bethesda, MD
<http://www.bethesda.org/node/178> .

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- Short North Arts District's Gallery Hop, Columbus, OH
<http://www.shortnorth.org/popular-links/gallery-hop>

OUTDOOR CONCERTS

Outdoor concerts are another tool that cultural districts use to attract visitors and residents. These concerts are usually sponsored by a local business or businesses and are usually held weekly or monthly in the evenings. Sometimes these concerts are held during the day for parents and their children.

Examples of outdoor concerts in cultural districts across the country:

- The Power & Light District, Kansas City, MO
<http://www.powerandlightdistrict.com/index.cfm?page=about>
- Bel Air Arts and Entertainment District Summer Concert Series, Bel Air, MD
<http://www.belairartsandentertainment.org/event/summer-concert-series-24>

STREET PERFORMERS/BUSKERS

Street performers/buskers help enhance the character of a cultural district. Many cultural districts have guidelines for busking that seek to balance the interest of the performers with residents and local businesses. And sometimes artists must apply to become an approved busker within a cultural district.

Examples of street performers/buskers across the country:

- Arts on the Streets, A Culture of Street Art Performances, Cincinnati, OH
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bjUjwKqw2qe0FQj-cnIWnU5trSPY0N_skuKw6yR5_d0/edit
- City of Lowell Performer Guidelines
<http://lowell.org/Pages/StreetPerformer.aspx>

FILM FESTIVALS AND OUTDOOR FILM FESTIVALS

Film festivals and outdoor film festivals are often year round events for cultural districts and can be a major tourist attraction and revenue generator for local businesses. During the winter months, many film festivals help sustain cultural districts because the events can happen inside.

Examples of film festivals across the country:

- AFI Docs, Silver Spring Arts and Entertainment District, Silver Spring, MD
<http://afi.com/afidocs/#>

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RESOURCES FOR EVENTS/FESTIVALS:

- National Endowment for the Arts
Live from Your Neighborhood: A National Study of Outdoor Arts Festivals, Vol 1:
Summary Report
<http://arts.gov/publications/live-your-neighborhood-national-study-outdoor-arts-festivals-vol-1-summary-report#sthash.OLhq956Y.dpuf>
- Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles
Festival Handbook -
http://www.culturela.org/events/Festivals/festivalproducer/Festival_Handbook.pdf
- National Main Street Center
Measuring the Economic Impact of Special Events,
<http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-news/story-of-the-week/2012/120627festivals/measuring-the-economic-impact.html#.U-JupyHD99B>