



ARTSFUND

Information: Sarah Sidman | 206-788-3051 | sarahsidman@artsfund.org
ArtsFund, Director of Strategic Initiatives & Communications

For Immediate Release: November 18, 2015

Tracking the Impact of Regional Cultural Organizations ArtsFund's 2014 Economic Impact Study Results Released

Seattle, WA – According to a new research study conducted by ArtsFund, regional nonprofit cultural organizations show post-recession stability. Growth can be seen in key indicators of aggregate economic impacts, attendance, budgets, and employment. ArtsFund's 2014 Economic Impact Study of Nonprofit Arts, Cultural, and Scientific Organizations in the Central Puget Sound Region—released on November 18, 2015—measures and documents the significant direct and indirect economic impacts made by cultural nonprofits in the Central Puget Sound region.

Mari Horita, ArtsFund President & CEO, stated, “As the findings show, cultural organizations are a significant economic driver in the Central Puget Sound Region, and an integral part of our regional identity and quality of life. They create jobs, generate tax revenue, and drive tourism, bringing ‘new money’ into the region. The data support the conclusion that investment in cultural organizations is an investment in the health and sustainability of our community.”

Key Findings

The activity of nonprofit cultural organizations and their patrons in King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties generated \$2.4 billion in business activity and supported 35,376 jobs in the Washington State economy in 2014. Labor income impacts were \$996 million, and cultural activity generated \$105 million in taxes. Approximately 30% of these impacts are in the form of “new money” coming from outside the region.

Horita continued, “Cultural organizations play a critical role in creating a vibrant, thriving economy and a more connected population. ArtsFund's Economic Impact Study reminds us about the impacts of the arts, not just on the economy, but on every aspect of our lives, including our understanding of ourselves and each other.”

ArtsFund's 2014 Economic Impact Studies include both a Regional Report (inclusive of King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties) and a King County Report. Downloads of the reports and their executive summaries are available at www.artsfund.org/eis.

Study Partners

Funding support for the 2014 Economic Impact Study was provided by: The Seattle Foundation, King County, 4Culture, Bank of America, Safeco Insurance, Visit Seattle, the Nesholm Family Foundation, Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, and Amazon.

The study is authored by Professor William Beyers of the University of Washington with research collaboration with GMA Research Corporation.

Scope of the Study

The study results, drawn from the 2014 calendar year, reflect data collected by 313 nonprofit cultural organizations with budgets of \$35,000 or more in King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties, as well as patron data from over 3,500 patrons. Disciplines included are: Arts Service Organizations, Dance, Festival and Interdisciplinary, Heritage, Music, Science, Theatre, and Visual Arts. This is ArtsFund's fifth in a series of Economic Impact Study analyses since 1992.

Income and Expenses

In fiscal year 2014, the total income of nonprofit cultural organizations in the Central Puget Sound region was \$512.9 million. Earned income from ticket sales, tuitions and workshops, retail sales, and other sources accounted for 56% of the total revenue, with contributed income making up 44%. Total aggregate expenditures by cultural organizations were \$496.4 million, 93% of which was spent in the local economy. This delicate balance of income and expenses shows that continued support from all sectors of the community remains critical.

Attendance

Annual admissions in 2014 totaled 13.4 million visits, nearly three and one half times the population of the four counties. Of these admissions, 1.2 million were visits by K-12 students. The study documents noticeable growth in the amount of free access provided by cultural organizations, with 42% of admissions being free or discounted.

New Money & Cultural Tourism

Approximately 30% of sales impacts and 28% of labor income impacts came from funding sources and patrons outside the four county region. These impacts are considered "new money" – funds that come here only due to the activities of local cultural organizations. Patrons are responsible for 75% of these new money impacts, showing the role of cultural tourism as an economic driver.

Patron Spending

Patron expenditures totaled \$694 million, with \$231 million spent on tickets. Restaurants, transportation, hotels, retail shops, and child care services account for the remaining two-thirds of the spending related to attendance at cultural activities. The impacts of these expenditures ripple throughout the economy of the entire state.

Patron Values

Over 90% of patrons surveyed at cultural organizations identified cultural activity as highly important to the Central Puget Sound region's identity and quality of life. Patrons report attendance and spending increasing or remaining stable in increasingly diverse modes of engagement.

One patron surveyed stated, "Having a variety of accessible cultural venues and events is one of the integral facets that make this region such a desirable place to live, like the natural beauty of the region."

Another patron offered, "Arts and cultural activities allow me to learn, explore, think, dream, and understand. These activities increase my quality of life, reduce stress, and encourage me to engage and participate in the community."

Volunteers

Cultural organization reported the use of 28,849 volunteers, providing 1.2 million hours of volunteer activity, an average of 41 hours per volunteer.

Full downloads of the reports and their executive summaries are available at www.artsfund.org/eis

#

ArtsFund's Mission: ArtsFund strengthens the community by supporting the arts through leadership, advocacy and grant making.

ArtsFund's Vision: A community with a dynamic and world-class arts and cultural sector where the arts are accessible to all and valued as a central and critical component to a healthy society.