

Arts + Social Impact Explorer Fact Sheet

OVERVIEW

AMERICANS
for the
ARTS

Arts-based community development (sometimes called creative placemaking)—and the deep integration of arts and culture into communities' pursuits of healthier, more vibrant, more equitable places—has a long history in the United States that stretches back thousands of years to the first Native American tribes and laces through post-colonization history as well.

Artists, arts organizations, and artistic activities in general play a valuable role in the development and long-term health and sustainability of our communities. Research shows that communities with a vibrant cultural scene are more desirable to live in, have greater economic stability, and attract a more diverse and educated work force.

Often when a community struggles with a social concern, arts projects can foster cooperative dialogue and bring about solutions and change. The arts drive an increased tax base, stronger social networks and community cohesion, reduced health risks, higher empathy, and more community pride. These things, together, make it possible for communities to progress toward their goals.

ARTS + COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

IMPACT POINTS

105% INCREASE IN REVENUE

Art and community development results in greater tax revenues. The downtown Phoenix creativity hub yielded a 105 percent increase in tax receipts, compared to a city-wide decline of 1.04 percent.¹

ARTS MAKE PEOPLE LOVE WHERE THEY LIVE

Love for your community leads to economic growth. Data from a three-year study show a significant link between resident attachment and local GDP growth, with the arts as a critical component.²

ARTS-RICH NEIGHBORHOODS 1.6X MORE CONNECTED

Art and community development strengthens social networks. Residents living on a block where community-based art projects took place were 1.6 times more likely to report they felt more connected to the neighbors.³

86% OF ARTS PARTICIPANTS MORE INVOLVED IN CIVIC ISSUES

Arts activities increase residents' interest in getting involved in local issues and projects. Eighty-six percent of participants who took part in community-based art want to be involved in future projects, and people living where these art projects occurred were more than twice as likely to be civically engaged as those whose neighborhoods did not have projects.⁴

5-10% INCREASE WITH ARTS ACTIVITIES

Neighborhoods with more arts activities see increases in housing, population, and school test scores along with a decrease in crime. A five-year study of low-income Chicago neighborhoods shows 5-10 percent improvements in each category in neighborhoods with high arts activities.⁵



EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE

Ashé Cultural Arts Center, New Orleans, LA



Ashé, a project of Efforts of Grace, Inc., is a community cultural arts center deeply rooted in Central City New Orleans that serves as a hub for people of African descent who live there.

<https://www.ashecac.org/new-index/jominor2009@gmail.com>

image: Community members at Ashé Cultural Arts Center, New Orleans, LA.

Connect the Lots, Camden, NJ



Connect the Lots uses arts, cultural, and recreational activities to activate vacant and underutilized city spaces. The activities visually connect neighborhoods, engage the community, and attract visitors.

connectthelotscamden.com

Bryant@coopersferry.com

image: I Love Camden. Roosevelt Plaza Park, Camden, NJ. Courtesy of Coopers Ferry Partnership.

Porch Light, Philadelphia, PA



This joint collaboration between Mural Arts, the City of Philadelphia's Department of Behavioral Health, and Intellectual disAbility Services

focuses on achieving universal health and wellness among Philadelphians through meaningful works of public art.

<https://www.muralarts.org/program/porch-light/info@muralarts.org>

image: Colorful Legacy by Willis "Nomo" Humphrey & Keir Johnston. Photo by Steve Weinik. Courtesy of Mural Arts

Irrigate, St. Paul, MN



Based on a three-year initiative created by Springboard for the Arts with the City of Saint Paul and Twin Cities Local Initiatives

Support Corporation and in response to disruptive construction of a light rail line through the urban core, Irrigate is a community development strategy that mobilizes the skills and creativity of local artists to create innovative, meaningful, authentic solutions to local challenges.

<https://springboardforthearts.org/programs/irrigate/laura@springboardforthearts.org>

image: Irrigate closing celebration. Credit: Sean Smuda.

Opa-locka Community Development Corporation, Opa-locka, FL



OLCDC works with the residents of the distressed areas of Opa-locka and North Dade County to improve access to housing, health, education, employment, safety, and culture, often utilizing art-based strategies.

olcdc.org

logan@olcdc.org

image: Community Paint Day, April 2015. Photo by Walter Hood. Courtesy of OLCDC.

top image: Rutgers Camden Represents at Camden Jam. Roosevelt Plaza Park, Camden, NJ. Courtesy of Coopers Ferry Partnership.

REFERENCES

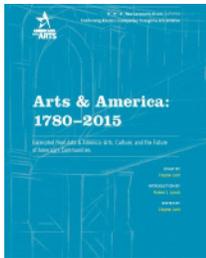
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2. John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. (2010, November 15). Got Love for Your Community? It May Create Economic Growth, Gallup Study Says. (Press Release). Retrieved 28 January 2018 from <https://www.knightfoundation.org/press/releases/got-love-for-your-community-it-may-create-economic>

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READING LIST

Arts & America, 1780-2015



This essay from the book *Arts & America: Arts, Culture, and the Future of American Communities*, covers the history of arts-based community development from the founding of the modern United States to present.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/90681>

Culture Builds Community Evaluation Report



This study evaluated the impact, successes, and failures of a William Penn Foundation program in Philadelphia.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/86875>

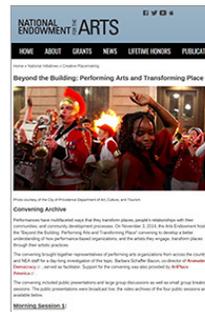
Arts and Culture Planning: A Toolkit for Communities



This tool kit is intended to help municipalities incorporate arts and culture into their communities; enhance livability by improving quality of life; and become more attractive places to live, work, and play. It offers a primer on different types of arts and culture and their inherent primary needs and secondary impacts, then proceeds to detail steps that can be taken by communities.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100967>

Beyond the Building: Performing Arts and Transforming Place



In 2014, the National Endowment for the Arts hosted *Beyond the Building* to better understand how performance-based organizations transform places through their artistic practices. The video archives can be accessed online.

[arts.gov/partnerships/beyond-the-building-performing-arts-and-transforming-place](https://www.arts.gov/partnerships/beyond-the-building-performing-arts-and-transforming-place)

Effective Community Arts Development: Fifty Years, Fifty Tips



These 50 tips, gathered by Americans for the Arts on its 50th anniversary, show how to best equip communities for effective arts development.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/95436>

top image: THRIVE Urban Farm Volunteer Day, February 2018. Courtesy of Opa-locka Community Development Corporation, Opa-locka, FL

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- Nicodemus, A., Engh, R., & Mascaro, C. (2016). Adding it Up: 52 Projects by 30+ Artists in 4 Neighborhoods. Metris Arts Consulting. Retrieved 20 January 2018 from <https://issuu.com/metrisarts/docs/adding-it-up-final-draft-web>
- John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. (2010)



ORGANIZATIONS

ArtPlace America

ArtPlace is a creative placemaking hub that includes a variety of resources on key areas of focus.

<http://www.artplaceamerica.org>

Our Town/How to Do Creative Placemaking

The program supports creative placemaking projects that help transform communities through strategies that incorporate arts, culture, and design. The program also offers creative placemaking resources.

[arts.gov/artistic-fields/creative-placemaking/creative-placemaking-resources](https://www.arts.gov/artistic-fields/creative-placemaking/creative-placemaking-resources)

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)

LISC supports projects that revitalize communities and bring greater economic opportunity to residents. It works with community-based partners to invest in housing, business, jobs, education, safety, and health.

lisc.org

Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP)

SIAP focuses on the relationship of the arts to community change, with a particular interest in strategies for neighborhood revitalization, social inclusion, and community wellbeing.

repository.upenn.edu/siap

top image: Youth participant of Visual Art Program at Art on 51. Photo by Brother Juan Acuna, Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



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