Arts + Social Impact
Explorer Fact Sheet

ARTS + INNOVATION

OVERVIEW
The arts open new avenues of thinking, force people out of their comfort zone, create collaborative and non-hierarchical spaces for new thinking, and encourage imagination.

Even as the arts themselves must innovate, working with new forms of technology and ways of living, they inform the transformation of business, the social sector, education, and more.

Continuous innovation is essential to future survival, particularly in volatile times. The arts make that possible in more places and ways.

IMPACT POINTS

54% OF INNOVATORS ENGAGE THE ARTS TO SUCCEED.

Entrepreneurs producing new products engage art and design in more than half of cases.¹

ARTS-TRAINED INNOVATORS ARE 74% MORE INSIGHTFUL

The innovation outputs of teams who had arts-based training showed 111% greater insight into the challenge, a 74% greater ability to clearly identify a relevant problem, a 43% improvement in problem solving, and 68% more impact.²

THE ARTS SPARK NEW WAYS OF THINKING AND INVENTING.

The arts help workers connect seemingly unrelated questions, problems, and ideas, driving innovation in the workplace.³

CREATIVE THINKERS GENERATE MORE POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS.

Research shows that high school students given creative interventions innovated more solutions to a proposed problem than those without.⁴

CEOS SAY CREATIVITY IS THE MOST ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP SKILL.

A 2010 IBM survey of 1,500 CEOs from 60 countries and 33 industries worldwide revealed that creativity — more than rigor, management discipline, integrity or even vision — is the most essential leadership skill in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.⁵

STUDENTS WHO ENGAGE WITH ART ARE 30% MORE OBSERVANT

Observation drives innovation, and according to research from Yale University, students who engaged with art presented more object findings and were more fluid and innovative in their diagnosis of challenges—30% more!⁶
EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE

Ada
Ada is the first architectural pavilion project to incorporate artificial intelligence. Ada’s knitted light immerses visitors in a responsive and interactive glow of photoluminescence driven by individual and collective human-expression data gathered and housed within Microsoft Research Building 99. 
image: Ada in the Microsoft Research Building.

Art Hack Day
Art Hack Day is an internet-based nonprofit dedicated to hackers whose medium is art and artists whose medium is tech. We bridge the gap between art, technology and entrepreneurship with grassroots hackathons & exhibitions that demonstrate the expressive potential of new technology and the power of radical collaboration in art. We believe in non-utilitarian beauty through technology and its ability to affect social change for public good.
http://www.arthackday.net/about

Cyborg Arts Co-Lab
Cyborg Art is an artistic movement where artists extend their senses beyond their physical boundaries by applying technology into their bodies. The goal of the Cyborg Arts co-lab was to produce a tangible proof-of-concept artwork that could theoretically be turned into a cyborg sense (such as sight, feeling, etc). The results would be envisioned to be implanted inside the living tissue of a human animal but would only be built as a proof of concept.
https://www.cyborgfoundation.com/
image: Neil Harbisson and Moon Ribas, two prominent cyborg artists.

Mycelia
Mycelia is a "think-and-do-tank" which seeks to empower a fair, sustainable, and vibrant music industry ecosystem involving all online music interaction services using blockchain. Its blog, What can blockchain really do for the music industry, explores its work.
http://myceliaformusic.org/2017/07/26/midem17-can-blockchain-really-music-industry
mycelia@imogenheap.com
image: Mycelia’s Carlotta de Ninni giving her views on blockchain.

Visions of the Future
The Jet Propulsion Lab collaborated with 9 artists, designers, and illustrators to design travel posters advertising intergalactic travel destinations. The posters are made in the style of vintage national parks ads combining American nostalgia with futuristic views of space travel.
daniel.e.goods@jpl.nasa.gov
image: The Grand Tour, one of the posters for intergalactic travel produced by the Jet Propulsion Lab.

REFERENCES
continued on next page
Tech As Art: Supporting Artists Who Use Technology as a Creative Medium

Tech As Art is a field scan and report that explores the multi-faceted practices of artists who engage with digital technologies in both the creative and functional aspects of their work. The report also looks at the training and exhibition infrastructure that tech-centered artists have developed to pursue their creative practices, and diagnoses a critical need for funding to advance the field.

https://www.arts.gov/about/publications/tech-art-supporting-artists-who-use-technology-creative-medium

The Impact of Arts-Based Innovation Training on the Creative Thinking Skills, Collaborative Behaviors and Innovation Outcomes of Adolescents and Adults

In 2012, with the support of the National Science Foundation, the organization The Art of Science Learning set out to connect the dots by testing the hypothesis that integrating the arts into STEM-related innovation training results in enhanced creative thinking skills, more robust collaborative processes and stronger innovation outcomes through experimental research. This report provides clear evidence of a strong causal relationship between arts-based learning and improved creativity skills and innovation outcomes in adolescents, and between arts-based learning and increased collaborative behavior in adults.


Rural Arts, Design, and Innovation in America

This report from the National Endowment for the Arts overlays data from the Rural Establishment Innovation Survey (REIS), County Business Patterns (CBP) data, and research from the NEA to explore the impact of the arts on innovation in rural settings.


The Art of Innovation: How Fine Arts Graduates Contribute to Innovation

Produced by NESTA in the United Kingdom, The Art of Innovation is an inquiry into how fine arts graduates contribute to innovation through their working lives. It is the result of a nine-month study into the working lives of fine arts graduates and the ways in which they contribute to innovation, both within the arts and in the wider economy.


REFERENCES continued


Center for Cultural Innovation
The Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) was founded in 2001 as a California 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. Its mission is to support individuals in the arts—artists, culture bearers, and creative entrepreneurs—to realize greater self determination so as to unfetter their productivity, free expression, and social impact, which contributes to shaping our collective national identity in ways that reflect the diversity of society.
https://www.cciarts.org/

Culture Tech
Culture Tech is a company that is developing new mechanisms for securing the rights of artists in the digital space while also expanding access to their work.
https://culture.tech/designing-a-culture-of-innovation-in-the-arts/

Google Arts & Culture
Google Arts & Culture is a non-profit initiative that works with cultural institutions and artists around the world. Together, our mission is to preserve and bring the world’s art and culture online so it’s accessible to anyone, anywhere.
https://artsandculture.google.com/

Nesta
Nesta is the UK’s innovation agency for good. They design, test and scale new solutions to society’s biggest problems, changing millions of lives for the better.
https://www.nesta.org.uk/about-us/

Fast Company
Fast Company is a monthly American business magazine published in print and online that focuses on technology, business, and design. It publishes eight print issues per year.
https://www.fastcompany.com/

**Thank you to our sponsors**

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